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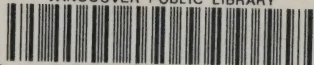
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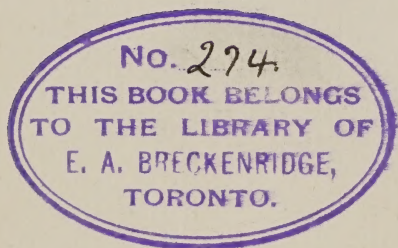
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The Romance of a Jesuit Mission

The
Romance of a Jesuit Mission

A Historical Novel

By

M. Bouchier Sanford



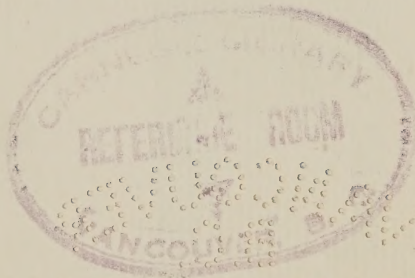
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To the

Rev. William S. Rainsford, D.D.

And the Assistant Clergy of St. George's Church, New York,

in Recognition of their Reverence for and Sympathy

with the Earnest Faith of Other Men, though

it be not in All Ways in Accord with

Their Own

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Preface

The ancient country of the Hurons is now the northern and eastern portions of Simcoe County, Ontario. It lies within the peninsula formed by the Nottawasaga and Matchedash bays of Lake Huron, the River Severn, and Lake Simcoe. In this area the sites of more than a hundred Huron villages have been located. The Hurons were incessantly harassed by hostile tribes, and were compelled to move from one place to another for safety.

The first intention of the Jesuits was to form permanent missions in each of the principal Huron towns, but before the close of the year 1639 they were obliged to relinquish this idea. They therefore established a central station as a base of operations, as a residence, fort, magazine, and hospital. The site is near the present town of Midland on Gloucester Bay, not far from the little River Wye. Sainte Marie, as represented in its ruins to-day, is the oldest, and, with the exception of the remains of the fort on Isle St. Joseph, the only work of its kind in the Province of Ontario. The Canadian Institute has taken steps to insure the preservation of the relics of this monument.

Of the mission and the Fathers Parkman speaks as follows:

"On two sides the fort was a continuous wall of masonry, flanked with square bastions, and probably used as magazines, storehouses, or lodgings. The sides toward the river and lake had no other defence than a ditch and palisade, flanked, like the others, by bastions, over each of which was displayed a large cross. The buildings within included a church, kitchen, refectory, places of retreat for religious instruction, and lodgings. Beyond the ditch or canal which opened on the river was a large area, still traceable, in the form of an irregular triangle, surrounded by a ditch, and apparently by palisades. It seems to have been meant for the protection of the Indian visitors who came in throngs to Sainte Marie, and who were lodged in a large house of bark, after the Huron manner. Here, perhaps, was also the hospital, which was placed without the walls, in order that Indian women, as well as men, might be admitted to it."

"A life sequestered from social intercourse, and remote from every prize which ambition holds worth the pursuit, or a lonely death, under forms, perhaps the most appalling—these were the missionaries' alternatives. Their maligners may taunt them, if they will, with credulity, superstition, or a blind enthusiasm; but slander itself cannot accuse them of hypocrisy or ambition." M. B. S.

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The Romance of a Jesuit Mission

I

A Mysterious Arrival

Beyond the border of the forest there was a wide clearing, and far across this clearing was a fortification, from which the lights gleamed through the swiftly falling snow. It was the central station of the Jesuits of the Huron Mission—Fort Sainte Marie.

On this winter night of the year 1649, the Fathers, who had gathered from their scattered missions to attend one of the periodical councils at the fort, had assembled in the refectory of the residence. They had spent the day in devotion and consultation, and were now seated about a long table made of rough boards. At another table sat the members of the household—soldiers, traders and laborers.

As this was a festive occasion, there was on each table a large dish of venison, a rare treat. Instead of bread, there were coarse cakes of pounded maize; the vegetables were baked squash, and a mixture

of corn and beans, like succotash. The everyday fare was sagamite, composed of pounded maize, boiled, and seasoned with scraps of smoked fish.

The Father Superior, Paul Rageneuve, sat in the place of honor. At his right was Father Bresani, whose scarred visage bore witness to his trials as a pioneer of the Faith. Near him were Jean de Brébeuf and Gabriel Lalemant, from the Mission of St. Ignace. There, too, were the scholarly Noël Chabanel, the gentle Charles Garnier, and their colleagues, eighteen in all.

A silence had fallen upon them, for Joseph Chaumonot had announced that he had seen Antoine Daniel, the martyr missionary of St. Joseph, seated in his place, that had been left vacant. His countenance, so said Chaumonot, was radiant and majestic, and the Fathers believed that the spirit of the proto-martyr had appeared to them, to inspire them to endure to the end.

Though the night was cold, the rudely built hall was warm and cheerful, for great blazing logs crackled in the stone fireplace. Presently the missionaries began to recall experiences in their earlier, unsubstantial houses, and in the bark lodges of the Hurons, where the smoke of the fires had no outlet but a hole in the roof; and where, with inflamed and streaming eyes, they had spent many evenings, trying to study by the dim light of smoky fires.

The conversation at the other table was animated, but the voices were subdued, lest they disturb the priests.

Presently a laborer remarked, "Jules Venette is long absent; yet he said he would haste to return for his supper."

"It may be the wind had forced open the church doors," said Pierre Mounier, another laborer. "I will place his portion and the boy's by the fire; so they have not cold fare."

Notwithstanding the protection of the walls, the wind roared within the fort, and the drifts were high, so Jules and a boy, Bernard Gautier, had been sent out to see if the windows and doors of the church were securely fastened, and to sweep away the snow if any had drifted in. After attending to their errand, the two had passed the gate that opened toward the forest.

"Jules," pleaded the boy, "open the gate and look out. I want to see how high the drifts rise."

Jules wished to return to the warmth of the hall; but he yielded to Bernard's plea and opened the gate.

Some of the drifts were almost even with the tops of the walls.

"It's well for us," said Jules, "that no Iroquois have been seen of late; for were they near us now, they would pack the snow and scale the wall."

He stood in silence for a moment, and looked

toward the forest. Presently he clutched the boy's arm, and said, in a hoarse whisper, "Bernard, look! What see you?"

Bernard, peering through the snow-wreaths to a drift a few yards distant, saw an object that, to his terrified eyes, appeared to be of gigantic proportions.

He stood, almost paralyzed with fear. Then Jules seized him, and drew him within the gate.

When the gate closed there came a sound that chilled the blood in their veins—a shrill, agonized wail—mingling with the howling of the wind, it seemed like the cry of an animal in its death-throes.

"Jules, Jules, what is it?" Bernard spoke in a low, awed tone, as if he feared the dread thing might hear him.

Jules crossed himself. "I know not what it is. It is not of human form, and I fear it will bring evil to this place."

The pair made their way to the residence as quickly as they could. But, in his haste, Bernard tripped and twisted his foot under him. When Jules helped him to rise, he limped, and was obliged to go slowly.

The cry came to their ears again, but it was weaker.

"Jules," whispered the boy, "it is the voice of a woman."

"Hush! I tell you it is nothing human. The

creature is full ten feet high. Saw you not its monstrous size?"

When they reached the kitchen Bernard sank on a bench, and Jules took off his moccasin and bound the maimed foot. Then, supporting the limping boy, he entered the hall.

One of the priests was making an address, and every one was listening, so Jules must defer his tale. The Superior motioned to him to seat himself beside Bernard, and finish his interrupted meal.

In the cheerful blaze of the fire, with his comrades about him, and satisfying food before him, the creature of the snow began to assume less formidable proportions. Was it possible that the strange shape had been formed from the snow-flakes by the wind? Was the terrible cry only the voice of the storm? He could not readily believe that he and his companion had been so deceived; yet he foresaw that he might bring on himself the ridicule of his comrades by his tale of a phantom, and he was glad that the long address gave him time for consideration.

He had just whispered to Bernard to say nothing about the monster when there came a knocking at the door. Huron visitors sometimes arrived late in the night; but the sound was neither the rough pounding of a warrior, nor the timid tapping of a Huron girl. It had a fine, but penetrating quality.

Every eye turned to the door, but no one rose, and no word of welcome was uttered. It was evident to every man that no ordinary visitor stood without.

The faces of Jules and Bernard grew ghastly.

The rapping was repeated, accompanied by a low, moaning sound.

"The gates are closed," said Father Ragueneau. "I know not how a stranger could come within the fort. Yet some poor wanderer may seek shelter this bitter night; and, whether it be friend or foe, we should not refuse it. Take arms, my sons, lest this be a snare; then, Victor Caradeuc, open the door with caution."

The men seized the weapons that were always at hand, and stood on the defensive, while Victor unbarred the door. He had intended to look out cautiously, but the object that confronted him so unnerved him that he threw the door wide open, and the creature staggered into the hall.

Some gazed in silence. Others drew back, and made the sacred sign, as if to ward away some evil thing. Here and there were heard exclamations of awe and wonder.

The visitor's eyes glanced from one to another; its lips muttered unintelligible sounds.

Brébeuf left his place, and strode toward it. As he approached, it lifted up its hands, as if with a last effort, and fell heavily on the floor.

The Fathers drew near, but their steps were strangely light, as if they were not treading the solid floor. The members of the household, at greater distance, peered eagerly. The shorter ones tiptoed to look over the shoulders of their companions.

The form moaned, gasped feebly, then lay silent.

Brébeuf stooped, raised it in his strong arms, and bore it to a bench which was covered by a robe of bear skin.

The hesitancy, induced by wonder, had been but of momentary duration. The strange visitor appeared to be in sore distress, and the Fathers were anxious to do what they could to relieve it.

The face now upturned to the light was that of a young girl, and, though pallid and pinched with cold, its rare beauty was apparent. The brilliant eyes were half closed. Some locks of hair had escaped from their coil beneath the hood, and hung to the ground. They were stiff with crusted snow, to which clung fragments of bark and pine needles. When the hood was removed the hair shone in the firelight with a rich golden hue, with a tinge of red. The tattered skirt was heavily encrusted with snow. The boots showed rents and gashes made by rough travel. A heavy cloak enveloped the upper part of the body, and had probably saved the girl from freezing.

The Superior directed the men to leave the room.

The crowding toward the couch hindered the ministrations to the sufferer.

No wonder that these men had at first looked upon the visitor as a supernatural being. No white woman had ever been within the walls of Sainte Marie; as far as they knew, not one had been within hundreds of miles of that mission. Some of them had not seen the face of a countrywoman for years. And how had such a fragile creature come through the forest in midwinter by a route whose hardships had tested the endurance of strong men?

The Fathers knelt by the couch, removed the torn, wet boots, and chafed the frost-touched feet and hands.

Brébeuf went to the room without, and directed one of the traders, "Victor Caradeuc, go quickly with René le Breton to the lodge of Kishik. Tell her of the arrival of this young stranger, and bid her and Nialona bring warm clothing to replace her frozen garments. Then return here with both women. Should the girl become conscious, she may be comforted by their presence, though they be of darker skin."

II

Kishik and Mialona

The lodge occupied by Kishik and her granddaughter was situated outside the fort in a triangular-shaped piece of ground enclosed by palisades. There was a hospital in this enclosure, and there were larger dwellings, for the old men, women and orphan children, whom the Fathers had gathered there for protection and instruction. At one side were two or three bark lodges of great length, for the reception of visiting Hurons. Other buildings were of rough boards or logs.

When the messengers knocked at Kishik's door, a girl's voice asked, in good French, "Who is without?"

The manner of the knock informed her that the visitor was not an Indian.

"Caradeuc and Le Breton," said Victor. "We bring a message from the Superior."

The girl opened the door and revealed a small room, whose furniture had evidently been made in the wilderness with imperfect tools.

An old woman had been dozing on a rug which lay near the table. A chair stood beside the table

for her use; but partial civilization had never overcome her early habit of squatting on the floor. On state occasions, such as a visit from one of the Fathers, she sat upright, and very uneasily, in her chair.

The girl had been reading by the dim light of a dip candle, and her book lay open on the table.

She wore a blanket dress, loosely made, and girded at the waist by a band formed of strips of deer skin, interwoven with colored bristles. A similar band decorated the neck. Her black hair was neatly braided in two long plaits that hung below the belt. Her speech and movements indicated that she had been accustomed to civilized life.

In the year 1631, Kishik, with Nialona, then an infant of a few months, had been rescued from a band of Iroquois in the neighborhood of Quebec. Their captors had murdered all the other members of their family. The Frenchmen, who had taken them from the Iroquois, put them in charge of the Jesuits, who sent them to a convent in France, and there they passed seventeen years. They were happy years to Nialona, who had known no less restricted life; but Kishik found them most wearisome. She could not adapt herself to civilization, and her devices to evade the efforts of the good nuns for her improvement tried their patience sorely. Nialona was a bright and diligent pupil. When she had reached the age of eighteen, she was sent

back to Canada with her grandmother, and was soon afterward called to the Mission of Sainte Marie, to assist in teaching Huron women and children.

"Mademoiselle Nialona," said Victor, "a stranger, a woman, has come to the fort through the storm. The Superior directs you to find dry, warm clothing for her, and to return with us."

Kishik rose and held her head as if listening to the howling of the wind. "Her own lodge should hold her this night," she grumbled.

Nialona at once busied herself in making up a bundle of clothing. When she had done so, she wrapped Kishik warmly, and sent her out, leaning on the arm of René le Breton. She put out her light, and followed with Victor.

She had not doubted that the stranger was a Huron woman. She had often been called to minister to squaws or their children who had arrived at the fort pleading for aid. On the way from the palisaded enclosure, she questioned Caradeuc. "What brought the stranger here at this hour?"

Caradeuc was reticent. He wished to see Nialona's surprise.

The snow had drifted in great heaps across the path, and more than once Nialona plunged waist deep in a drift. Caradeuc offered her the support of his arm, and was delighted by her acceptance; mindful of her convent training, she received any

advances from the young men of the mission with much dignity and reserve. The Christian girls within the palisades were strictly guarded, and were seldom permitted to receive a visit from one of the soldiers or traders without the surveillance of a priest. Caradeuc appreciated his opportunity, and would gladly have taken advantage of it by avoiding the short cut to the fort, or by lingering in the drifts; but the urgency of the case compelled haste. Kishik, plodding slowly, had not reached the fort when Caradeuc knocked at the door of the refectory.

The door was opened by one of the priests, and the young man followed Nialona into the room.

The stranger lay on the couch, moaning faintly.

Nialona did not see her face till she was almost beside her. Then she exclaimed in astonishment.

The attending priest held up his hand in warning.

"How beautiful, how beautiful!" said the Indian girl in a low voice. "I thought to see one of our own people."

"Did not Monsieur Caradeuc explain?"

Caradeuc smiled. "Pardon me, Father; I planned a little surprise; yet we have brought the clothing. It is here."

Nialona longed to ask questions, but her training enabled her to restrain the expression of curiosity. She went to the door to inform Kishik that the stranger was a white girl. Kishik received the in-

formation in her usual stolid way. Her early life had been marked by tragic incident; the arrival of a stranger was a matter of little account to her. She was more interested in the cheerful fire and the remains of the feast on the table. But she listened with docility to the instructions of the priest, and when she was left alone with Nialona and the patient, her aged hands were gentle enough in removing the ice-crusted clothing, from which the water was dripping to the floor.

Presently the girl opened her eyes and looked at Nialona in an appealing, bewildered way. Nialona kissed her forehead, hoping to comfort her. The pale lips quivered, as if some memory were stirred. The Indian maid spoke soothing words, and stroked the stranger's face gently, and soon she lay quiet again, and apparently unconscious.

On account of the storm, the Fathers had decided that she should not be removed to the hospital. So the couch was made soft by additional rugs, a bed was prepared for Kishik in a corner, and Nialona had a fur rug and blankets on the floor beside her patient. A screen was drawn before the fire, and a night lamp, formed of a floating wick in a tiny vessel of oil, was placed so it should not disturb the girl.

Nialona was awakened from a light doze by a footstep in the room. She started up and saw a young man who had not been present at the even-

ing's feast. He had gone out of his way to pursue a lurking foe, and having returned very hungry, had come to the refectory in search of food. He looked about him in astonishment; then, perceiving that Nialona was awake, stepped lightly toward her to inquire who was ill.

"Hush!" whispered Nialona. "It is a stranger, a girl who came in this night, laden with snow, and with clothing torn, as if from a long journey. But whence she came, no one knows; and she, being in delirium, cannot tell us."

At that moment the girl moved, then suddenly raised herself and sat up. She looked about her for a few moments in a bewildered way until her glance fell on young Léon de Charolais; a gleam of intelligence lighted her face, and she looked at him as if she recognized a friend. His face flushed, then paled; there was an expression in her eyes of trust, of appeal, that deeply moved him. Presently she swayed. Nialona put her arm about her, and laid her gently down. Her eyes closed, and she lapsed into unconsciousness.

De Charolais looked at her for a few moments, then turned abruptly, and left the room.

III

Léon de Charolais

From childhood De Charolais had wished to be a soldier, to be valorous in arms, like other men of his noble house. His mother, devoted to the Church, tried to persuade him to become a soldier of the Faith rather than an officer in the army of France. But her plea was without effect till she lay on her deathbed; then, when she sent for him and besought him to grant her last request, to permit her to pass from earth in joy instead of mourning, he made a solemn vow that he would soon enter his studies for the priesthood, and would never turn back or fail in his promise. His heart rebelled; but he compelled himself to submission. The duties assigned to him in his novitiate were repugnant to him; but he did them thoroughly, as far as outward act was concerned. He could not stimulate in himself any of the enthusiasm or religious zeal that he saw in others. His heart reached out toward the life he had relinquished; but his will was strong; he disciplined himself rigorously, and succeeded in keeping his reluctant feet in their path, his unwilling hands to their service.

When he was yet a student, before he had taken priestly vows, he was ordered to the Jesuit Mission in North America. His father at first sought to obtain a remission of this sentence of banishment. He had but two sons, and Léon, the younger, was his favorite. He had felt keenly the necessary separation when Léon entered the novitiate, and the boy had deplored the loss of his father's companionship, and had used every opportunity to renew it. His father was his ideal. But after a consultation with the General of the Order, in which Caraffa promised to recall the young man in two or three years, if his conduct should justify it, the father withdrew his plea.

Why did the Society of Jesus send a youth of the temperament of De Charolais to the work of a mission in the wilderness? That Society knew its men. It knew that this one had not the spiritual devotion that had enabled others of similar nature to curb it, or transform it to spiritual power. He longed for the life of court or camp, and in that longing lay danger. In the outdoor life of the mission, in the fascinating element of peril, his energies, his restless, uncompliant disposition, would find a vent which could not be given in the Old World. To the laborious missions, the Society usually sent men of tried virtue; but it sometimes found it expedient to transport a troublesome member to a remote country.

Every year that Society made a list of its houses and members; in which the names, talents, virtues and failings of each were recorded. In the course of training, instruction was skilfully adapted to the bent of the individual. One of the Generals, alluding exultingly to his philosophers, mathematicians, and orators, exclaimed: "And we have men for martyrdom, if they be required!"

The men who had been sent to the Huron Mission were men for martyrdom, heroic and devoted, and from among the purest of their order.

No charge of any serious moral failing had ever been made against De Charolais; and, with the exception of some boyish pranks, he had outwardly kept the law of obedience, but the authorities discerned the inward revolt, which might at any time become active. They represented to the General that his tendencies might be repressed or diverted by the life in the Huron Mission; and Caraffa, who was much interested in the brilliant youth, ordered him there, in the hope that his waning faith might be renewed and his better nature developed by association with the devoted missionaries.

For some time after his arrival he appeared despondent, but the despondency passed away under the invigorating influences of his new environment; his natural buoyancy, which he had for years endeavored to repress, rose and asserted itself unchecked. He was soon the most popular man in

the mission. His genial comradeship, his high spirits, wit, and good humor, endeared him to the soldiers and traders. His fine physique and manly strength won the admiration of the young Indians, and they were always ready to leave their gambling games—a source of much uneasiness to the good Fathers—for a race or a wrestle with their hero. The Fathers turned this devotion to good account, and punished unruly Indian boys by forbidding them to join in these recreations, or rewarded them by the promise of an outing with their friend. He had learned many Huron words on his voyage across the Atlantic, from copies he had made of documents that had been sent over by the missionaries, and was soon able to converse with his Indian companions. So, though the priests regretted his lack of spiritual fervor, they found him a willing and useful assistant, and, at the earliest opportunity sent a satisfactory report to their General.

On his part, De Charolais was well pleased with his new supervisors, and frankly contrasted their mutual trust and good-fellowship with the espionage that had been a continual source of irritation to him. He became specially attached to Father Brébeuf, and spent much time with him at St. Ignace.

At the time of the arrival of the mysterious stranger, he had been nearly a year in the Mission, and had never given the missionaries any grave anxiety.

IV

Seeking a Clew

The early morning was clear, and there was little wind. Before dawn laborers had removed the drifts from the paths, and the sick girl, carefully covered from the cold, was carried on a stretcher to Kishik's lodge. She would be more comfortable there than in the hospital. Should she regain consciousness, she might be disturbed by the squaws and sick children if she were placed in the ward of the Indian women.

Jules Venette had cautioned Bernard not to mention to any one that they had looked through the gateway and seen a strange figure. But Bernard's nature was not adapted for keeping secrets, and he confided the tale to Laurent Girot, who, in turn, repeated it to Pierre Mounier, and it finally came to the ears of the Fathers.

Jules, in his terror, had not fastened the gate firmly, and the high wind had forced it open far enough to admit the slight form of the girl. Jules was admonished for his carelessness. Any skulking Iroquois might have entered in the same way. But on the other hand Jules consoled himself with the

reflection that had the gate been firmly fastened the girl would probably have perished in the snow.

Several men went out to try to trace her foot-prints, but the drifts had covered them. Beyond the discovery of the open gateway, nothing was added to what they already knew. She had retained sufficient consciousness to enable her to seek a shelter, and, when she had succeeded, had fallen into stupor.

It seemed probable that she had been captured by Iroquois, and had escaped from them. In that case, they might be in the neighborhood; so men were detailed to keep watch. The members of the household were instructed to be silent regarding the white stranger when they were beyond the confines of the fort. Kishik and Nialona were cautioned to keep the Huron women for the present out of their lodge. Washaka, a Christian Huron girl, was taken into confidence, in order that she might help Nialona to care for the patient. It was in the interests of secrecy that the Fathers had ordered the removal of the sick girl to Kishik's lodge before the people in the palisades had risen.

At intervals, for several days, Huron warriors and French soldiers brought in reports of Iroquois lurking in the forest. The palisades were guarded night and day, and arrangements were made to move the women and children to the fort if an attack seemed imminent. But no attack was made,

and the ambushed men disappeared. Probably their force was too weak to attack Sainte Marie. The Fathers had hoped that the Hurons would capture some of the enemy, from whom they might learn how the young stranger had been brought from the white settlements; but they were disappointed.

Notwithstanding the important questions of missionary effort which the Fathers discussed in council, the chief interest of the household centred in the patient. But days passed and she did not recover consciousness; so the missionaries left for their scattered stations without receiving any solution of the mystery.

After lying in a stupor for some time, she began to mutter and rave, but her words were in a tongue that was not intelligible to Nialona; and it happened that when any of the priests came in to inquire about her condition she was silent.

At last she fell into a natural sleep. The Fathers knew that the crisis was near. She might pass away without waking; she might rouse from sleep, but without a restoration of reason, and sink into the torpor of approaching death; but, should she awake conscious, she would probably live, unless her strength had been exhausted.

A priest, skilled in medical lore, was watching beside her when she opened her eyes, and he lifted up

his heart in thanksgiving, for the light of reason was in them.

She looked at him in a bewildered way, and, evidently, with some alarm.

"You have been ill," he said, answering the appeal of her eyes; "and we have taken care of you. We hope you will be better soon."

She shook her head slowly, as a sign that she did not understand. She had never heard the French language spoken.

Presently she said in English. "This place—I do not know it. All is—so strange."

The priest had never studied English, and for a few moments he was at a loss. The girl's expression was so perplexed, so pathetic, that he not only pitied her, but feared her distress might cause a relapse.

He repeated a prayer in Latin. If she was a Catholic, it would be familiar to her. But her face was troubled and anxious as before. That too was an unknown tongue.

A thought occurred to him. De Charolais was a linguist. He could speak English and German, and it appeared probable that the stranger was English. He called Nialona, told her of the difficulty, and set out in search of the young man.

De Charolais was at the Mission of St. Louis, three miles away, but a messenger was sent to bid him hasten to the fort. Meanwhile Nialona had

tried to soothe her patient, and had persuaded her to take some nourishment; but she was working herself into an excited condition by her vain attempts to make herself understood when De Charolais was announced.

Nialona had propped her up slightly and wrapped her in a loose garment of a soft blue shade. Her waving golden hair was loosely braided, the color of her gown accented the deep blue of her eyes, excitement had deepened their brilliancy and sent a flush to her cheeks. De Charolais thought he had never seen any one so beautiful.

He sat down and said to her in English. "You have been very ill, and we have nursed you. We are your friends. Do not fear, no one shall harm you."

Her face flushed, paled, and quivered, and she burst into violent sobbing, which sorely embarrassed Léon.

Nialona came and put her arms about her, petted and soothed her, and presently she said, weakly, "It is—for joy—I wept. I feared that never might I hear my own tongue again."

"We are French, but I and others have learned the English tongue," replied De Charolais. He remembered, and the recollection gave him pleasure, that at present he was the only English speaking man at the fort.

"How—came I here?"

"On a cold and stormy night you arrived, well-nigh frozen, at our doors; not here, but at the fort beyond, where our priests live that they may teach the Indians. You were ill, very ill, and exhausted."

She lifted her hand to her forehead, as if trying to recall something.

"Do not think, do not trouble now," he said gently. "When you are strong you will tell us of yourself."

She fixed her eyes intently on him. "In the forest—that—terrible night——"

She shuddered and covered her face with her hands.

"We will not speak of it now. Let no thought trouble you. With us you are safe. We will care for you. Trust us."

She smiled sweetly. "I do trust you. You are like—so like——"

She gave a pitiful sigh, and her voice broke. She was very weak, and he feared she was going to cry again. He rose nervously, and said, "I must leave you now with your good nurse. She is of Indian birth, as you see, but she lived in France many years. She knows well how to care for you. Her name is Nialona. She says she wants to be your sister. Say to her, 'Nialona, ma sœur,' she will understand."

The girl repeated it, and her voice was sweet, "Nialona, ma sœur."

Nialona's face gleamed. She said a few words to De Charolais.

"She asks you to tell her your name," he said to the stranger.

"My name is Dorothy."

The young man repeated it to the Indian girl. Then she knelt by the bedside, took the wasted hands in hers, and said, "Dorothy, Dorothy, ma sœur, ma sœur."

De Charolais was loath to leave them. When he moved away, Dorothy cried, appealingly: "But—you will come again. You—you only can speak to me."

"Yes, I will come again."

V

Life in the Palisades

Some of the Huron lodges in the palisades were very long buildings, with partitions of poles and bark separating the inhabitants into families. This was an improvement on the ordinary Indian dwelling, in which the house was often one great chamber, lodging a number of families. The frames of such dwellings were made of saplings, planted in double rows for the sides of the houses, bent till they met, and lashed together at the tops. Other poles were bound transversely, and the whole was covered with large sheets of bark. There were neither windows nor chimneys. Light and air were supplied by an opening in the roof. At each end was a store-room, where casks of bark, filled with Indian corn, smoked fish and other provisions not liable to injury from the frost, were stored. Sometimes provisions were buried in deep holes in the earth, within or without the houses. Wide scaffolds, formed of posts and transverse poles and covered with thick sheets of bark, on which were laid mats and skins, were built along the entire length of both sides of the house. In summer, the

inmates slept on these scaffolds, and used the space beneath for storage. In winter, they slept around the fires, which were on the ground, in a line down the middle of the dwelling. The influence of the missionaries had improved the interior of the houses in many respects, but the people clung to some of their customs.

Kishik's lodge had been built under the direction of the Frenchmen. It was a substantial log house, with a sloping roof. It had a stone fireplace and chimney, and, rarest of luxuries, a small glass window in the sitting-room, and a window in each of the three bed-rooms. Kishik had also a kitchen, with a good cellar below. The furniture of this lodge, though made in the wilderness, had a resemblance to that in the abodes of civilization. There were chairs and tables, cupboards and bedsteads. Kishik and Nialona had some toilet articles, brought from France, which were the wonder and delight of the Huron girls who were permitted to see them. Sometimes, as a special treat, Nialona let them look into her mirror, a very small one. They amused themselves by gazing at their reflections in lake or river; but the wonderful mirror was not affected by ripples on the surface or cloudy skies. They admired Nialona's brushes, and had ingeniously manufactured some for themselves from bristles, and had learned to brush their hair and braid it neatly.

Nialona, with Washaka and Panasawa, two or-

phan girls who had been under the care of the missionaries for some years, assisted the Fathers in the instruction of the children. They also taught the Huron women to cook, to keep their lodges in better order, and to care for the younger orphans.

The priests found the children far more tractable than their elders. Father Daniel, the martyr of St. Joseph, had translated the Pater Noster into Huron rhymes, and the children readily learned this and other prayers, and their musical voices were sometimes heard in sacred song. As rewards of merit, a few beads or two or three prunes or raisins were given. But about the time of Dorothy's arrival these treats became rare. The dangers of Iroquois attacks and the possibilities of siege were increasing, and the stores must be economized.

The winter days, when the stranger lay slowly convalescing in Kishik's lodge, were anxious ones to the missionaries. Straggling parties of hunters brought word that signs of the Iroquois had been seen in the neighborhood. Yet the Hurons would not be roused to take active measures for defence. It was rumored that a thousand Iroquois, chiefly Senecas and Mohawks, had taken the war-path for the Hurons late in the autumn, and were wintering in the forests. The Jesuits counselled and exhorted their Huron people to be ready to meet the danger; but their warnings were vain. The Indians lay idle

in the villages, or made hunting parties for the woods. The anxiety and the preparations for defence must be borne by the missionaries and their assistants alone.

Besides the eighteen priests, there were at this time, in the various stations, four lay brothers, twenty-three men serving without pay, seven hired men, four boys, and eight soldiers. The white traders, many of whom were devoted to the mission, had the right to trade with the Indians, and sell their furs at the magazine of the Company; some of them turned the profits of their trade to the benefit of the mission, with the object of making it partially self-supporting. But these men, on whom reliance could be placed, were scattered throughout the missions, and would be gathered in the fort only in case the other stations were of necessity abandoned.

The day after Léon de Charolais had spoken to Dorothy, he was sent on foot with an Indian "runner" to carry a message to a distant mission. As he was swift and sure-footed, he was often appointed to such work, and preferred it to teaching or assisting in the services of the Church. Nialona tried to explain his absence by signs; but her patient appeared so distressed that she sent for a priest who could speak a few words of English to assure her that the interpreter would return in a few days.

The poor girl, unable to hold communication

with those about her, lay in a depressed and listless state, and many times Nialona saw tears rolling down her pale cheeks. And who could wonder that she was unhappy? It was probable that she had been seized and carried away from her own people. It might be that they had been murdered before her eyes. On the return of De Charolais, her story would be told.

Meanwhile, with the idea of diverting her, some of the Huron girls were invited to the lodge. They sat on the floor, weaving rush mats or baskets, or making nets from twine which they had spun from hemp by rolling it on their thighs. The stranger watched them for a time with some interest, and then closed her eyes wearily. The next day they brought in new work, thinking variety would please her, and while one embroidered a robe, and another worked moccasins with the dyed quills of the hedgehog, a third fashioned decorations with white and purple wampum beads.

Nialona had a piece of porcupine quill work on hand for the hospital. The groundwork was formed of finely cut strips of leather fastened together as a warp; these strips were bound two and two by colored quills, wound several times and fastened ingeniously. On this groundwork the Indian girl was interweaving a large cross. She had become skilful in fine embroidery in the French convent; but her supply of materials for such work was very

small, so she had learned the handiwork of her Huron companions.

The stranger smiled sweetly when she understood that her visitors were trying to divert her; but the smile came with effort. She was very weak yet, too weak to be much interested in anything; when strength returned slowly, keener remembrance came with it and anguish of heart.

The soldiers and traders, the French boys in the fort, and the Huron boys in the palisades, sought excuses to call at Kishik's lodge, and some of them brought dainties for the invalid; but since the night of her arrival they had not seen her.

Young Bernard Gautier had suffered much from remorse. He believed that if Jules Venette and he had searched the drifts when they heard her cry she might have been spared much suffering. He tried to make amends by bringing her such delicacies as he could obtain. He had some nuts left from his autumn store, and these were placed at Nialona's disposal to make cakes for Mademoiselle Dorothée. Bernard had eaten cakes in France with pounded nuts in them. One day he brought a fish which he had caught through a hole in the ice. To his great delight, Nialona invited him to come in. Dorothy was propped up in an easy chair which had been made for her by Caradeuc and Le Breton. Had Kishik accepted all the offers of lounges, chairs, and other furniture of forest manufacture

for the comfort of the invalid, her lodge could not have contained them.

The boy held the fish toward Dorothy, and she understood he had brought it for her. She bowed and smiled pleasantly, and his handsome face flushed with delight; but when he went out he was more uneasy than before lest she should hear of his shutting the gate against her. When he announced to Marc Fourcheux that he had seen Mademoiselle Dorothee, Marc inquired, jeeringly, "Ah, did the lady desire that you should see in good daylight that her height is not ten feet?" And poor Bernard could make no reply.

In the time that passed before De Charolais returned Dorothy learned some French and Huron words, but could not make her hearers understand her story. When Nialona told her that the young man was at the fort, and would soon come to see her, her eyes brightened, her listlessness gave place to animation, and Washaka said: "Ah, the white stranger's heart was sore, her voice was silent; now she will speak of her own people; her heart will be glad; she will be well."

Yet it was evident that she shrank from speaking of her people. De Charolais thought her reluctance was explained when she told him that her father and mother had died within a few days of each other, that she had been left penniless, and had

been sent from England with strangers to find a home in the New World.

“Had you no relatives to care for you?” asked De Charolais.

Her pale face flushed, and she hesitated before she answered, “No, not one.”

The story she told was, that when they had been at sea for weeks, and hoped they were nearing land, a terrible storm arose, almost wrecked their ship, and drove them far out of their course. After tossing about for many days, they came in sight of land; but the dismantled ship was driven on the rocks, and some of the passengers and a part of the crew were drowned. The others reached the shore in one of the ship’s boats, with such provisions as they could carry.

It was late in the autumn, and very cold; but the sailors said the season had been milder than usual, and the ground was not yet covered with snow. It was an unknown coast to the seamen; there was no sign of habitation; but they believed they were not far from the French settlements.

For a day or two they remained near the shore, hoping to catch sight of some vessel. Some of their men went inland, others a few miles to the south, to see if they could discover any inhabitants; but returned with the news that they had not seen a human being.

On the fourth day a party of men returned in

much alarm. They had seen a large fleet of canoes manned by Indians coming in the direction of the encampment of whites.

They dared not venture on the water, as the men reported that the Indians largely outnumbered their party. They were reluctant to abandon their boat, in which they had hoped they might make their way along the coast to the white settlements; their only safe course appeared to be to go inland; at least, until the Indians were out of sight. With great difficulty they carried the large boat ashore, and stowed it high on land in a thicket, hoping the Indians would not land and discover their footprints.

Then they made their way as rapidly as they could through the pine forest, placing marks on the trees here and there so they might return by the same path; yet endeavoring to cover their footprints and the tree marks so they should not be too readily discerned by the Indians.

Late at night they halted for rest, and were so weary that they slept until they were roused by their watchmen, who reported that the Indians were following.

They set out in the darkness of night, men and women and young children, not knowing whither they went. They were seeking escape from one band of enemies, but they might be walking into the embrace of another.

They trudged wearily that night and the next day, taking short intervals of rest and hurried meals. It seemed evident that the Indians had given up their pursuit, and the fugitives had a night's rest without disturbance. But they doubted the possibility of finding their way again to their boat and the shore, and the danger of meeting the savages appeared too great.

They wandered for many days, sometimes fording streams on which ice had begun to form. Their provisions were running short, their clothing was insufficient for the cold weather, and they were still wandering in an uninhabited region. It was November, but winter had set in, and they feared they should be frozen or starved in the wilderness. One day they came on the ashes of camp-fires. Their scouts reported that they were in the neighborhood of an Indian encampment. They were so depressed by their privations that they had almost lost their terror of encountering the savages, and it was possible that the Indians might be friendly.

Several men were sent out to reconnoitre. They were absent long. Then one came back. His companions had been killed in a skirmish with a band of red men.

They hastened away again, expecting almost momentarily to be overtaken; but again, for some reason that they did not understand, the enemy ceased to pursue.

One day a man who had been sent in advance returned to say that he was sure he had caught sight of two white men dressed in skins. He had shouted to them, but they had not heard; and he could not overtake them. Their hopes rose; they believed they were approaching a white settlement. But it was late, and they encamped for the night. Toward morning they were roused by wild cries. Their sentries had been attacked. Then confusion reigned. The women and children darted here and there, seeking shelter, not knowing where to find it, and Dorothy was separated from her companions.

She wandered alone until she caught sight of an Indian peering about, and then she secreted herself in the forest. She was hiding in a hollow tree when a man passed. She could not see his face through the snow and darkness; but was convinced from his dress that he was not an Indian, and so gathered courage to call to him. She saw him turn to pursue the savage, and though her mind had grown bewildered from her long wandering and lack of food, she was impressed with the belief that there were white people in the direction in which he had been going. She made her way to the border of the forest and saw the lights in the fort. She had no distinct recollection of anything that had occurred afterward until she had awakened to consciousness in Kishik's lodge.

This part of her story was told with a frankness that left no doubt of its truth in the mind of De Charolais. But her hesitation concerning her previous life, her uneasiness when questioned, convinced him that some painful secret was connected with her departure from England. Had she been a Catholic she might have been induced to reveal it in the confessional; but she had been brought up in a faith that held it in distrust; and it was evident from remarks that escaped her, that though her prejudices had been modified by the kindness of the missionaries, she looked on the confessional as a device of the Evil One.

No sign of her party had been seen by the Frenchmen. The violent storm had covered all tracks; whether they had been captured by the Indians, or had escaped, and gone southward, no one could tell.

VI.

The Missionaries and Their Flock

The priests had been schooled to bear the opposition and unruly conduct of the Indians with patience. A paper printed by the Jesuits of Paris gave them these instructions regarding their conduct toward those whom they sought to convert: "You should love the Indians as brothers with whom you are to spend the rest of your life.—Never make them wait for you in embarking.—Take a flint and steel to light their pipes and kindle their fire at night; for these little services win their hearts.—Try to eat their sagamite as they cook it, bad and dirty as it is. . . . Do not make yourself troublesome, even to a single Indian.—Do not ask them too many questions.—Bear their faults in silence, and appear always cheerful. . . . Be not ceremonious with the Indians; take at once what they offer you: ceremony offends them. . . . Remember that it is Christ and His Cross that you are seeking, and if you aim at anything else you will get but affliction for body and mind."

In the instruction of their people the priests found pictures of Heaven, Hell, and the Last Judgment.

ment very effective. Some intractables circulated a report that a young girl had returned to life, and had given a deplorable account of the Heaven of the French. She said that the Jesuits had tried to convert the Indians to their faith in order that after death they might have the satisfaction of torturing them in Heaven.

The pagan could not readily understand the love and forgiveness taught by the Christian. "Why did you baptize that Iroquois?" asked some converts of their priest, who had baptized a captive who had been afterward tortured to death. "He will get to Heaven before us," said the captors, "and will try to turn us out."

When the villages of Wenrio and Ihonatiria were visited by pestilence, Garnier and Jogues, the missionaries there, were accused of being the cause of it; their litanies were said to be charms and incantations; and baptism was dreaded as a precursor of death. Nevertheless, if the missionaries heard the wail of a sick child they entered the wigwam, in spite of threats, and, while making inquiries about the infant frequently contrived to baptize it; sometimes bringing in a little water for that purpose on a corner of a handkerchief. They deceived the parents, but they believed that their action was justified, because they saved the child from the "Infernal Wolf," and enabled it to pass from the wigwam of the savage to the abode of the blest.

They gladly braved death and endured pain and privation, and at last won to their side many among whom they labored.

Their daily life was systematic. The priests rose at four from the sheets of bark on which they slept, and employed the time till eight o'clock with masses, private devotions, reading religious books, and breakfasting. At eight they opened the door and admitted the Hurons. Those who appeared intractable were courteously requested to depart; the more docile were catechized. At intervals the guests smoked their pipes while they squatted on the floor.

To make provision for the large number of people who depended on them, the priests at Sainte Marie cultivated a tract of ground near the fort, where they raised quantities of Indian corn, pumpkins, beans, and other vegetables. Within the walls they had cattle, swine, and poultry. Their usual food was sagamite, but this simple fare was a treat to some of the improvident Indians.

They were anxious about the spiritual condition of the young heretic who had been so strangely and, as they believed, providentially cast upon their care. But for the present they were obliged to leave her to the ministrations of De Charolais; his skill as an interpreter was not to be denied, but he had never given any evidence of zeal for the conversion of the Indians, and the Fathers were

doubtful of his efforts to win the white sister to the Faith. But she was learning French and Huron, and they must be patient.

One mild Sunday morning they thought she was strong enough to attend mass in the chapel of the fort. Though she could not understand the words, she might be impressed by the service. The French and Huron boys disputed for the privilege of conveying her to the chapel on a toboggan. The matter was finally settled by lot, and Bernard Gautier and Mitasog had the honor by turns.

The church was full to the doors, for, in addition to the Hurons who lived in the palisades, visitors from other villages came to the fort on alternate Sundays and were entertained until Monday.

Dorothy's first public appearance caused the good Fathers serious anxiety. They had expected that the visiting Indians, who had never seen a white girl, would show much curiosity; but they were not prepared for the great interest of the young traders, some of whom had not been at the fort on the night of her arrival, and had come to the service from neighboring missions because the news had spread that she would attend mass. One dark, bold-looking youth, Raoul Hauteroche, stared at her so persistently that she blushed deeply and tried to avoid his eyes. De Charolais observed her embarrassment, and shot an indignant glance at Hauteroche, which the trader met with an in-

solent expression. Léon was not assisting in the service, but sat in the body of the church, to help to keep order among the more intractable Indians; but all thought of this duty passed from his mind as soon as he became aware of the undesirable attention that Hauteroche and the other young men were bestowing on Dorothy. He had seen her almost daily, had been the bearer of messages of sympathy and kindness from the Fathers, and had on his own part done what he could to cheer her. He had come to look on the time he passed with her as the supreme hour of the day. He knew that she trusted him, depended on him, that her face brightened at his approach, and dropped when he left her; that she never failed to beg him to come again soon, and often asked why he could not spend more time with her. He believed she was under his special protection, and almost resented any interference with his plans for her, even from the Superior, though he had never given expression to this feeling. He remembered uneasily that Hauteroche could speak English, and the thought sent the blood to his face.

While he sat, full of jealous forebodings, heedless of the service, and unmindful of the scuffling of some Indian boys, he observed that Dorothy's face had grown very white and that she was swaying in her seat. Hauteroche, too, had observed it

and had risen, but De Charolais was at her side before him.

"Are you ill?" he said, bending low.

"Yes, yes; please take me away," she said, faintly.

He stooped, raised her in his arms, and carried her from the church, while she clung to him as if fearing she would fall.

The atmosphere of the chapel had been close, and she revived when she was in the open air. Nialona had followed, and De Charolais saw that directly behind her were Hauteroche, Le Breton, and Victor Caradeuc.

Hauteroche drew out the toboggan, and there was a sneer on his face when he suggested that De Charolais return to his duties in the chapel, and permit him to convey Mademoiselle Dorothée home.

"No, no," whispered Dorothy, "not that man. Do not leave me."

The trusting face, the clinging arms, were dear to Léon. He did not want to relinquish his precious burden. He whispered to her tenderly, as to a timid child, "Do not fear. I will be with you. I will take you home."

Then he stooped and placed her on the toboggan, and tucked the robes carefully about her.

"My thanks, Monsieur Hauteroche," he said,

“but I require no assistance, and will not detain you longer from the service.”

Defiant glances were exchanged by the two young men; but Hauteroche made no open resistance, and returned to the chapel.

The relations between the trader and De Charolais had never been friendly. Hauteroche was a vain fellow and a braggart, and the other men thought he was jealous of Léon's popularity. Many of the traders were devoted to the mission; but it was evident that Hauteroche had not come there with disinterested motives, and that his sole object was to enrich himself. He sought every opportunity to ingratiate himself with the Fathers, but they distrusted him.

After they left the chapel, he accompanied them to the residence to dine, and took occasion to warn Father Ragueneau privately that unless there was a speedy end to the relations between De Charolais and the fair stranger, Léon would soon discover that he had no vocation for the priesthood.

He was gratified by observing the concern in the Superior's face, and the insolence of his glance at De Charolais was mingled with an expression of triumph that perplexed Léon.

VII

Léon Receives Notice of Banishment

In the afternoon Léon was summoned to the Superior's room, a bare and cheerless place, and something in its aspect, or the Superior's manner, made the young man's heart sink.

Ragueneau had not taken counsel with any one regarding the insinuations of Hauteroche. He had given them careful consideration, and had decided that he would not refer to Dorothy in his interview with Léon.

As soon as the young man entered, the Superior began, abruptly: "Léon, Father Garnier is at this time almost alone at St. Matthias, in the Tobacco Nation. He needs an assistant, and the choice has fallen upon you. Prepare to leave this mission to-morrow, at dawn. Some Huron men will accompany you. You will carry a sealed letter of instruction for Father Garnier."

Ragueneau observed that the young man started back as if he had received a sudden blow. He could not disguise the trouble in his voice when he asked: "Father, do you mean that I take your instructions to the mission, and return here?"

"I do not," said the Superior, sternly. He was a disciplinarian, earnest and sincere; but he had not much tenderness in dealing with human weakness. "You will remain at St. Matthias to assist Father Garnier. I have no reason at this time to believe that we shall have occasion to recall you."

"I will be ready, Father," said Léon. His voice sounded flat and lifeless.

"That is all," said Ragueneau; and Léon left him.

He was at a loss to understand the unexpected action of the Superior, his curt manner, and few words. He did not connect his dismissal with Dorothy, until, about an hour later, when he was on his way from the fort to the palisades, he met Hauteroche by the gate. Hauteroche had heard the news from Caradeuc, and was awaiting an opportunity to taunt De Charolais.

"Ah," he said, mockingly, "you go to inform Mademoiselle Dorothée of your approaching departure. Would I might witness the parting. She will be pensive, therefore more beautiful. But be comforted, my friend, she will not remain long in affliction. I have observed her. She is April's child: now smiling, now sad. She will readily forget."

Léon muttered something between his teeth, which Hauteroche could not hear. But he followed De Charolais, and continued, "The good Superior

is wise. Ah, he was once young; perhaps even now, who knows, he hides tender memories beneath a stern visage. He has become aware that he must take speedy action, else might the Church lose a priest whose favor with the fair sex may hereafter win even heretics to the faith. Perhaps it is even now too late. It may be that one whose spiritual state has caused the good Father sore anxiety has discovered his unfitness for the sacred vocation. The time has been so short, yet all have observed the understanding, the more than friendly relations, between him and the fair stranger."

The next moment Hauteroche was sprawling on the snow, and Léon said, as he strode past him, "When you carry this tale to the Superior pray mention it as another evidence of my fitness for the sacred office."

He understood now. Hauteroche, or some one at Hauteroche's instigation, had advised Father Ragueneau to prohibit his visits to Dorothy. Yet he had made them in the first place under the instructions and with the approval of the Superior. True, the visits had become more and more frequent. He had called several times in one day, and had perhaps neglected duties in consequence. But he had done it openly, and had never been reproved. Had any one dared to utter slanderous words, to speak lightly, falsely, of her? He recalled Father Ragueneau's hardness, his apparent displeasure,

and his face burned with indignation. Of himself they might think and speak as they pleased; but no one, not even the Superior, should dare to utter a word against her, pure and innocent, untouched by evil, as she was. Not a word had passed between them that he would hesitate to tell his confessor. The Fathers had given him a position of trust, and he had neither by word nor deed betrayed it intentionally. He had been injudicious in meeting her so often, but he had meant no wrong. He recalled now the tremor in her voice, the light in her eye, at his approach, to which his voice and eye had answered. But, until the moment when the Superior had given the word that would part them, he had not realized his feeling for her. He had sympathized with her desolate position, had longed to cheer and comfort her; but he had been so schooled to the belief that he must never permit a thought of love to enter his heart that it had come upon him unawares. He realized it now, yet he had no thought of opposition to his Superior's command. He had been ordered to go far from her, and he must obey, and part from her, if need be, at once and forever. But he felt that in leaving her he would leave all the sweetness that life held. The hearts of the other men were in their work. The Fathers were content, more than content, to work for God and the souls of their people; the traders were devoted to the mission, or to the pursuit of

gain. But since the time when he had given up the hopes of his life, in compliance with his dying mother's plea, he had lived but for the day, without any but a passing interest, with no defined hope or object. He had done the work appointed for him; but his heart had not been in it.

While he was making his preparations for departure he almost determined to go away without seeing her. He feared that in parting from her he might betray too much feeling. But he longed to see her face once more, and were he to leave her without a word his conduct would appear to her cruel and unwarrantable.

When he knocked at Kishik's door it was Dorothy's voice that bade him come in. When he entered he found her alone.

"Where is Mademoiselle Nialona?" The question served to cover some embarrassment.

"She has gone to see a little child who is very ill. Grandmother Kishik is with her."

"I—have come to ask, are you better? Have you recovered from your illness of this morning?"

"Thank you; I am not ill. It was only that I have not yet strength to sit up so long, and the crowd was great."

When she had finished speaking, he stood near her, looking down into her face without a word.

"What is it?" she asked, and her voice was

troubled. "Has anything happened? Why are you so pale?"

"I am going away to-morrow." His voice was so low that she heard with difficulty.

"To-morrow! But only for a little while. You will come back?"

"No, I am going far away. It may be I shall never come back."

"But why?"

"I have no choice. The Superior commands, and we must obey. An hour ago he told me I must leave at to-morrow's dawn, to go to St. Matthias, the farthest mission; it is in the land of the Tobacco Nation. He gave me no hope that he would recall me."

She dropped her head in her hands, and both were silent. When she looked up her face was wet with tears. "O, it is cruel," she wailed. "It will be so desolate, so dreary, without you. I—cannot bear it."

She had no thought of disguising her distress. Her frank delight in his presence had been one of her great charms for him.

He tried to comfort her. "It may be the Superior will grant me permission to return. I cannot tell. But—now you speak some French, some Huron words, others will understand; you will be less lonely. Nialona, Washaka, are kind. If—you should be in sorrow, if you need counsel, help, ask

permission to write to Father Brébeuf at St. Ignace. He knows your language well. He will come to you."

She shook her head sadly. "Ah, no; but—you are different. They—the priests are stern. They seek but to bring me to their faith. You are gentle; you are so good, so kind."

At another time he might have said that all the Fathers were kind; but it seemed to him then that the Superior was very hard. He answered: "At heart many are kind, the stern appearance sometimes hides the tender heart; but you will know that Father Brébeuf is truly kind and gentle—kind and gentle as he is wise and strong."

She found little consolation in his words, but she said only, "I have not seen him."

"You do not remember. On the night when you came to us he raised you from the floor, so they tell me, and carried you to the couch. He went back to St. Ignace in the morning when you were yet unconscious. It is but a few miles distant, and he has visited Sainte Marie since that night; but he has been always busy, so he has returned without seeing you."

There was silence between them. He fixed his eyes on her so intently that she cast down her own. Then he gave a quivering sigh, and turned his head away.

"O, why must you go?" she said, brokenly.

"Surely—it is a mistake. You—do good here. The boys love you. And—it breaks your heart to be banished. This—has been your home; your friends are here. Will they not plead with him, the Superior, to permit you to remain? It may be that his heart would soften."

"It would be useless, worse than useless. Were I to say a word, to oppose his decision, it would take from me all hope of recall. And—I cannot say in truth that he is not right, however hard it is for me to believe it and obey."

Something in his tone made her look at him in surprise. "Right! Do you mean there could be wrong in your staying here?"

He hesitated, and Nialona and Kishik came in. He told them that he must go away, and Nialona expressed regret; but it was evident that it did not touch her deeply. He stayed for a few moments and tried to conduct himself without betraying emotion. But when he took Dorothy's hand at parting, Nialona observed that he held it long, that his voice trembled when he said his farewell words, and that the pain that looked from his eyes was keen. She recalled insinuations of Hauteroche, remarks of Victor Caradeuc, on the young man's frequent visits. She had replied to them that it was proper that one who would be a priest should spend time in trying to win a heretic to the faith. As the conversations had been in English

she was not aware that De Charolais had made few efforts in that direction. She had said that his interest and kindness were natural, for the girl was a stranger and cut off from communication with others who could not speak her language. But she began to understand that his interest was more than friendly, and it shocked her convent-trained mind that a man who was destined for the priesthood should have permitted his affections to wander, or be disloyal for a moment, even in thought, to his holy office. Her training had apparently eliminated the savage from her nature. She had been much commended for her diligence and obedience, and thoroughly believed in her own rectitude. She was severe in criticism of actions that did not accord with her standard, and she began to condemn De Charolais without reserve. When he turned to speak to her she looked coldly into his pale face, and with a hard ring in her voice informed him that Father Ragueneau had doubtless excellent reasons for transferring him to St. Matthias.

His face flushed, and he replied with evident annoyance that he had not presumed to doubt the Superior's discretion, and was aware that he never did anything without good reason.

He turned once more to look at Dorothy, who was dismayed by Nialona's attitude, and then hurried from the lodge.

VIII.

Last Words with Brébeuf

Léon had been excused from duty. The Superior believed that he was in his narrow room preparing for departure. He had counselled him to spend the evening in prayer and meditation.

When Father Brébeuf arrived from St. Ignace to confer with Ragueneau on a difficulty that had arisen, the Superior informed him of Léon's approaching removal and the reasons therefor. To Brébeuf alone would he confide them.

Brébeuf was much moved. In spite of the difference in age—he was fifty-six years old—there was a strong bond of fellowship between him and the young man. He thought he understood De Charolais well. He saw in him the possibilities for good and for evil, and had often chosen him, with Ragueneau's permission, as his companion in work and in his rare times of recreation. Léon, on his part, was much attached to Brébeuf, and admired his manly vigor. His age had an evidence in the gray that sprinkled his short mustache and beard; but his tall, finely proportioned frame, erect and vigorous, showed no sign of diminishing power.

But when Ragueneau told him many things that had been repeated to him regarding Léon's devotion to the stranger, Brébeuf recalled the young man's reticence in speaking of the girl, and said, with a sigh, that the Superior did well in removing him from temptation.

He wished to see De Charolais, but the messenger who was sent to call him returned with the news that his room was empty, and no one in the fort had seen him within an hour.

"It may be he has walked to St. Ignace," said Brébeuf. "He would not willingly go so far without a word of parting to me."

"He did not ask permission," said Ragueneau. Léon's manner had been sullen and distant since he had heard the decree of banishment, and it had not propitiated the Superior.

"Poor lad," said Brébeuf. "He is thoughtless, but he means no disrespect. He knew you would not refuse his request to visit me, and in his distress at the parting he neglected to make it. If he is at St. Ignace, I will not detain him long."

But Léon was not at St. Ignace. When Brébeuf had left the fort a short distance behind him he discovered a tall figure pacing back and forth beneath the palisade wall, and he knew that it was Léon.

The last time they had walked together the young man's laugh had rung out gaily on the win-

try air. His dark eyes had glowed, exercise had brought a ruddy hue to his brown skin. Now, in the clear moonlight, Brébeuf saw that his face was pallid, his eye dull.

“Léon, my son,” he said, with gentle reproach, “had you forgotten me? Would you have gone away without a word to me?”

“Forgive me, Father; I have thought of you; I have longed to see you; but the time has been short; I was unprepared; I—have not known what to do.”

In his distress and confusion of mind, Brébeuf read the truth of Ragueneau’s fears, and Léon saw that the priest seemed to have been stricken with age. His face was pale and deeply lined; he was not erect, as he had been when he passed that way at an earlier hour.

“Come with me a little way,” he said; and Léon walked beside him on the crisp snow.

“Léon,” said the elder man, “I knew your father, and loved him; and when you came to us I loved you for his sake, and afterward for your own. I held you in my arms in your infancy, and your mother told me then that she had dedicated you to the service of the Church. I trusted that you would incline to it; I am aware of the trials the life imposes on one who has no spiritual devotion, and I would never counsel any youth to enter it if he could not do it with a willing and devoted heart.

You have told me, in bitterness of spirit, what your promise to your dying mother has cost you. But I have hoped that, in answer to many prayers, you would come to be more than reconciled. I know well how difficult your position is. Though a man's spiritual life be deep, though his heart be devoted to his work, he must strive and pray for strength to curb and guide his nature. I hoped that here, in the wilderness, you would escape some temptations; but—it has not been so."

He stopped and laid his hand on the young man's arm. "Trust me, Léon; tell me your trouble. It will be sacred with me as if spoken in the confessional."

There were tears in the young man's eyes. He did not answer; but he was touched by Brébeuf's sympathy.

"Léon, do you love the girl?"

"I do. God help us both."

"My son, surely you have not spoken of love to her?" Brébeuf's appeal was anxious.

"No, Father, not by any word. I—did not understand—until I knew that I must leave her. I have done wrong, but unwittingly, and—she suffers. It is in her face. Father, is it too late? I am not ordained. I have taken no irrevocable vow, unless that one to my mother be such. O, surely, were she living now, could she know the truth, she

would absolve me from that, and bid me, bid us both, be happy!"

Brébeuf did not answer.

"Father, could she hear my voice to-night would she not set me free?"

"My son, I cannot tell. Yet I believe that were she with us now, she would say, 'Be firm, be strong, and dare not to draw back.' That was your mother's nature. She was strong and enduring; she expected strength and endurance from others. She believed the priesthood was your destiny, and she exacted from you the promise."

"But was it right?"

Brébeuf sighed. "My son, the promise was given. It is for me to try to strengthen you, by the grace of God to keep it. You know the Scripture, 'If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee.' It is hard. I know it. But as the surgeon amputates the limb to save the life, so by cutting away the evil may the spiritual life be preserved. When you are at St. Matthias, fill your days with work, your mind with holy meditation and prayer, and resolve to put all thought of the young girl from your heart. Never, in any way, hold communication with her. Will you give me your word, my son? These are perilous times; we know not when we part if we may meet again in this world. As it were a last promise, will you grant me what I ask?"

The struggle was visible in the young man's face. A deep sigh broke from him. He had made his vow to one who was dead; he could not be released by her, and he must keep it. His code of honor was high. The word of a De Charolais must not be broken. And, if his vow must be kept, the Superior was right, Brébeuf was right, he must flee temptation. So presently he said, but his voice was low: "Father, I promise, except I be summoned back by the Superior, except I do it with his sanction, I will see her face no more. No word of mine henceforth shall serve to keep me in her memory, and—she may forget."

They walked on in silence for a few moments, then Léon said: "Father, she, too, may be tempted. She is innocent and pure; but there are evil hearts not far from her. Raoul Hauteroche you know, and she should know that he is not to be trusted. Father, I have told her that you would go to her if she is in sorrow. Will you see her soon, and comfort her if her heart is sore?"

"I will, my son; so long as I live I will be mindful of her. Your heart may rest in my promise as my heart has trust in yours. But, Léon, the words of the holy St. Paul have been oftentimes in my mind of late, 'I am ready to be sacrificed, and the time of my dissolution is at hand.' It is borne upon me that we speak together for the last time."

Brébeuf stopped, and put his hands on the young

man's shoulders and looked into his face. The moonlight was so bright that Léon saw the quivering of the strong mouth, the moistening of the dark eyes. He was deeply moved, and a vague dread of coming disaster was borne upon him. Before he entered the novitiate he had learned something of the scepticism of his day; he had heard discussions whether the soul is mortal and ridicule regarding certain so-called superstitions. Doubt had entered his mind and remained there. When he had expressed his doubts in confession, his confessor had told him they were temptations of the devil. He had tried to occupy himself in work and forget them. He had never spoken of them to Brébeuf; he had shrunk from distressing his friend. Despite Brébeuf's cool and vigorous judgment and sober sense in practical matters, he is regarded as visionary and superstitious by men of our time. He believed that he beheld visible presentations from the unseen universe, saw portents, heard voices, was tempted of hell, and succored by Heaven. The visible world was to him but a phase of the eternal, spiritual reality. His zeal and devotion are beyond question. Léon respected his earnestness, and had forborne to utter a word of incredulity regarding the marvellous visions. Now, in his excited, overstrained condition, the premonition of which Brébeuf had spoken had an unusual effect upon him, and the pain of parting was deepened by dread.

For several moments neither spoke, then Brébeuf said, "My son, you have much work before you to prepare for your departure, and I must not detain you; yet would I gladly keep you with me now, for I shall see your face no more."

"O, say not so, Father. God grant we may meet again."

"Nay, nay, my son; pray only that His holy will be done. Pray for me that I be faithful unto death. And so long as I abide in this body will I pray—yea, when the body is broken by the martyrdom which is coming soon upon me, my soul, which no mortal flame can sear, nor sword of man destroy, will pray for you and, if it be permitted of Heaven, will be near you to comfort and sustain you."

Léon could not answer, and Brébeuf went on: "Now into the hands of God I commit that which I have held most dear. Adieu, my son."

Léon was tall, but the giant-framed Brébeuf, the Ajax of the Mission, stooped to kiss his forehead—the kiss of benediction—a sacrament.

Then they parted; but when Léon had gone a little way he turned and saw that Brébeuf stood, gazing after him. For a moment they remained motionless, one looking at the other from afar, and then they went their separate ways.

IX.

Father Brébeuf Visits Dorothy

As soon as possible after the departure of De Charolais, Brébeuf visited the fort of Sainte Marie, and inquired concerning Dorothy.

The Superior said she was not gaining strength, and he feared she was fretting because Léon had been sent away. He could not ascertain anything of her state of mind with certainty; she was not able to express herself clearly in French, and his conversations with her had been brief. But even had she a command of the language it was unlikely that she would make any confession; she was not a Catholic, and, apart from the confessional, it might be difficult to induce her to give her confidence to a priest. Ragueneau had observed that she was timid and uneasy in his presence. He was glad Brébeuf had come, as he could talk with her in her own language.

When he reached Kishik's lodge in the palisades Brébeuf paused. It was a mild day, and the little window in the sitting-room had not its usual thick coating of frost. Dorothy sat near it. Her work had dropped from her hand, and she was leaning

forward in deep thought. Brébeuf stood for a few moments, looking at her intently. He thought he had never seen an expression so pathetic on a face so young. No ordinary girlish sorrow had left its imprint there. Was it only pining for Léon and grief for separation from home and kindred? Or had there been deeper tragedy in her past? The man who had seen much of human joy and sorrow believed that she had suffered bitterly.

When he knocked, Dorothy opened the door. Her face brightened, and she said, "I know you are Father Brébeuf."

He smiled benignantly. "Yes, my child; I have come to see you."

"Grandmother Kishik and Nialona have gone out," she said, "and I do not know when they will return."

It was evident that she was far from strong. The blue veins in her forehead, so clearly seen beneath the transparent skin, were witnesses of her fragility. Her hair was coiled about her shapely head, and fastened with pins that the Indian boys had carved from bone and stained in shades of reddish brown and gold. A blue-fringed cap like a toque surmounted the golden coils. She put her hand to her head when she noticed the direction of the priest's glance.

"Ah, my mind wanders sadly, Father, since I

have been ill. I came in nearly an hour ago, and my bonnet is on my head. I am very forgetful."

"I fear you are not gaining strength. Have you sufficient nourishing food?"

"Yes, Father; the young men, the Frenchmen and the Indians, are kind. They bring us many dainties—venison, rabbits, partridge, and fish—more than we can use. We often send portions to the sick in the hospital."

"Did not the Superior direct that you receive no presents?"

"He did, Father, and his reason was explained to me. Others might be displeased because so many gifts were made to me; yet all might see that because I had come to the fort ill and lonely the gifts were prompted by sympathy and kindness, for which I have been grateful."

"How is it then, my daughter, that you have disregarded the Superior's instructions?"

Dorothy tried to repress a smile. "Father, they offer me nothing; everything is now bestowed on Grandmother Kishik. She has often said: 'O, those young men, they once did leave me to eat sagamite day after day. What cared they? But their hearts change; they fill my house with all good things.'"

Brébeuf appreciated the humor of this devotion by proxy. He glanced about the room. Its appearance had been much improved. There were

new fur rugs on the floor, two easy-chairs, a comfortable couch, and a pretty rustic work-table on which were some dainty boxes and a book-rest.

"Were these also given to Madame Kishik?" he asked.

"Yes, Father; they were presented by Monsieur René le Breton—the table and the book-rest—Grandmother does not read. The rugs and some pretty furs and feathers were the gifts of others. Monsieur Fourcheux has so repaired the walls that Grandmother no longer complains of draughts, and Monsieur le Breton has made an excellent oven in the kitchen floor. He was troubled about Grandmother's appetite, and he made the oven so we might bake bread. It may be, Father, it would please you to see our kitchen."

The priest was aware that the girl was talking rapidly to conceal some nervousness and embarrassment; probably she feared he had come to question her. But he gave no sign of this understanding, and smilingly assented to her proposal to visit the kitchen and see the new oven.

Dorothy showed a girlish interest and pride in the contrivance. The oven was a hole in the ground, lined with stones. Dorothy explained that it was a few inches longer and wider than the baking-pans. The cooks placed live coals in the bottom of the oven, then laid in their pans, filled the sides and covered the top with coals. When they cooked

game they put water in the pan, and when the birds were done there was an excellent gravy surrounding them. "But, Father," Dorothy went on, "when we cooked our first partridges we were sadly disappointed when we lifted them from their pan. They were tender and pleasing to the taste, but white as though they had been boiled. We now hold them before the fire until they are of a brown color, and their appearance is more agreeable."

She went to a cupboard, which was also the work of René le Breton, and took out a pair of appetizing partridges and a jar of preserved cranberries. "Father, Nialona has told me this is not a fast day, though it is in the season of Lent. Will you gratify me by accepting these birds for your supper? They are my own. Grandmother Kishik gave them to me to present to whom it pleased me. No, you will not deprive us of our meal; we have already a sufficiency for our supper. You will do me a kindness by enjoying what we have cooked; and cranberries, I am told, are wholesome in the spring season."

Brébeuf assented on condition that Father Lalemant share the treat, and Dorothy packed them daintily in a basket.

"The poor little birds," said she when they had returned to the sitting-room; "they are happy in life; is it not cruel to put them to death that we may live? They tell me if our men did not shoot

them they would be the prey of other wild creatures. Yet, why must they suffer? Why should one creature prey upon another? Why is life so hard, so cruel?"

"Their suffering, child, is brief. The momentary pang in death is as nothing in comparison with their enjoyment of life; and we believe they do not feel pain so keenly as the higher creatures do. Do not doubt the wisdom and goodness of our Heavenly Father and His tender care for all."

"I have read in the Scriptures, Father, of a time to come when 'They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain.' Ah, I would it might come quickly! But——"

"What is it, my daughter? Do not hesitate to tell me anything that is on your mind."

"I have heard, Father, that those of your faith do not read the Holy Book. Is that true?"

"No, my child; it is a mistake. We read a portion of the Scriptures daily."

A knock interrupted the conversation. René le Breton had brought a pair of swinging shelves for Kishik's books. When he saw the priest, he left his gift with some embarrassment, and said he must return at once to his companion, Victor Caradeuc.

"Did not Monsieur le Breton bring the book-rest to Madame Kishik?" asked Brébeuf.

"Yes, Father." She smiled demurely. "There

are but two much-worn books, brought from France by Nialona."

"Does he make frequent visits?"

"Yes, Father; but they are brief. The Superior has directed the young men to remain without the door if duty requires them to call. Monsieur le Breton obtained a special dispensation to enable him to finish his work for Grandmother Kishik. But since that time he has not been permitted to cross the threshold. I have heard, indeed, that hereafter they may be forbidden to enter the palisades."

Brébeuf watched her keenly. Nothing in her voice or expression indicated that the presence or absence of the young men was of any interest to her.

"But I have been informed they have some opportunities to talk with you," he said.

"Yes, Father, when we go beyond the palisades to slide upon the ice, or walk on our snowshoes, three at least accompany us to guard us. There is always fear of the Iroquois. But one of the priests is also with us."

Dorothy's face lighted with amusement. The soldiers or traders were the guard of the white stranger and the Huron girls, while they, in their turn, were under the guard of a priest.

"You understand, my daughter, the necessity for this supervision, that a young girl must be very

discreet. You have no mother, no suitable woman guardian here to advise you; so we who know the world must do so."

"I think I am discreet, Father. If it is possible, I walk apart with one of the girls. And, Father, in our conversation we are discreet of necessity. They know few words of my language, and I have little acquaintance with theirs."

"Does not Monsieur le Breton speak English?"

"But poorly, Father. There is one, Monsieur Hauteroche, who converses in English with ease; but it is unnecessary to warn me to have few words with him. Monsieur Hauteroche is very objectionable to me."

Dorothy drew herself up, and her eyes flashed. A bright color flamed in her cheeks, but soon faded and gave place to the pallor of illness. For a moment the priest had a glimpse of an impulsive nature concealed beneath an appearance of indifference; though probably she was truly indifferent to many things. He saw, too, that if returning health should restore her brilliant coloring she would be even more beautiful than she was now in her delicate loveliness.

He asked no questions about Hauteroche. He remembered Léon's warning; and he had for a long time distrusted the young trader. He would advise the Superior to send him to a distance.

The time was passing quickly, and he had not

said what he had come to say. Even Léon had reluctantly admitted that Dorothy was strangely reticent about herself. She had evaded the answers to many questions, sometimes by asking questions about others. No one knew what her family name was. In response to inquiries she had said, with a laugh that concealed some disquiet, "Call me Dorothy. What need have I here of any other name?"

Yet, had she been practised in deceit, she might readily have coined a name.

"My daughter," said Brébeuf, "this is not a suitable place for you to live. For the present, it may be for many months to come, we must keep you here; for it would not be possible to return you in safety to your proper guardians. But as soon as may be we must communicate with them. Our Huron runners sometimes travel long distances, through many perils. A message borne by them to Quebec may be sent to England to your kinsfolk. Where and to whom should such a message be sent?"

Dorothy's face grew whiter, and she gave a little gasp of distress. But she did not answer a word.

Brébeuf looked very grave. "My dear child, it is evident that my question pains you; but I must do my duty. Is it possible that you have forsaken your own people? You are hiding a secret in your heart; we must not aid you in concealment."

The girl's hands were clenched, and she was trembling violently. "Father," she pleaded, "do not ask me. Let me stay here. O, believe me, it is better so; better for me, for every one."

"You are too young to judge what is best for you; and we cannot if we do not know the truth. Trust us. If you have done any wrong we will not judge you harshly. We know how many snares are set for young feet; how easy it is for such to stray from the paths of righteousness. We have learned from the Divine compassion to be tender and compassionate toward all. Only trust us, and do not fear."

The girl's slight frame writhed, as if in physical agony. Loud sobs, from a heart wrung with pain, broke from her. In a moment, to Brébeuf's surprise, she was kneeling at his feet, with her head bowed in her hands.

"I want to be good," she cried, with choking voice. "I want to do right. Indeed, I have tried. I will be obedient. I will be helpful. But I cannot, cannot tell you what you ask. May I not begin my life here, a new life, and put away from me all the past?"

Brébeuf was deeply moved, and his eyes swam with tears. "Poor child, poor little one; yes, I believe you want to be good, but it is not possible for you to conceal all your past and remain good and true. It may be some one has dealt harshly with

you, made you fear to confess. You are timid and delicate; you have not strength to tell that which would ease your heart if told. Here, kneeling as you are, ask God to give you strength to do your duty, to confess your sorrow, or—your sin.”

“O, Father, Father, I cannot tell you. It is not strength for confession that I need, but strength to bear my silence.”

Footsteps sounded on the snow, a hand was laid on the latch. Dorothy sprang to her feet, and tried to look undisturbed when Nialona and Washaka entered.

Brébeuf, wishing to divert attention from her tear-stained face, began to question the Huron girls about the school. When he took his leave, Dorothy followed him from the door. “Father,” she said, pitifully, “you are brave, you are true, and you think I am weak and false. Perhaps, if I could tell you, you would judge differently. But—I cannot, O, I cannot. Let me take my silence to the grave. I would I might take it there now.”

“It may be, my daughter, that you hold the secret of another, that it seems to you it would be dishonor to reveal it. Were you of our faith you would understand that in the confessional, where every confidence is sacred, the inmost secrets of every heart may be disclosed, to the heart’s great comfort. We will talk of this another day; but, believe me, I do not wish to force your secret from

you. I hope the time may come when you will give me your confidence freely."

Dorothy did not answer, and Brébeuf said, "The March air is cold for your uncovered head. I will see you again. And I will pray for you, my daughter."

"I thank you, Father."

She watched him as he walked to the gate of the palisades. She was glad he had said he would come another day. She little knew that he would never walk that path again.

X.

The Iroquois! The Iroquois!

The missionaries passed many anxious hours in the spring days of 1649. Rumors of the approach of the Iroquois were renewed, but the Huron men remained indifferent.

In the fort and the palisades work went on as usual. Nialona taught daily in the school, and Dorothy, who had learned some Huron words, was able to instruct the little ones.

After school hours, with a guard of strong Huron boys and one or two soldiers or traders from the fort, the young teachers took their pupils out for recreation. Sometimes they made snow forts and soldiers and had friendly battles. At other times they walked on snowshoes, slid on the ice, or coasted down the neighboring hills.

On the bright days of early spring the stronger ones tramped over the sparkling snow to the near woods to tap maple-trees. There had been thaws, and they often plunged waist-deep in slush, and went through the woods in damp, clinging garments. But they kept themselves warm by active exercise, and suffered no ill effects. When Dor-

othy showed signs of fatigue the boys drew her on their sleds, in turn.

They gathered the sap in troughs hewn from the solid wood, and boiled it in large pots over great log fires. The skies were clear, the air was mild, and the young people were in merry mood. Their laughter rang through the woods when they went from tree to tree to collect the sap, or stood at night about the huge fires in the clearing, taking turns in stirring the boiling liquid till the grain of the sugar formed, now and then pouring some, to candy, on the snow. When their work was done, when they piled great cakes of sugar and earthen vessels full of luscious syrup on the sledges, they went home gleefully to house their sweet stores.

They knew that their elders were anxious, that all must be watchful, but the element of danger gave an added fascination to their pleasures.

Their thoughtless, pleasurable excitement in the vicinity of peril gave place to a terrible realization.

Early one morning the sentries were alarmed by great clouds of smoke that rose above the leafless forest from the southeast. Then tongues of flame shot upward, and smoke and flame were seen in the direction of the Mission of St. Louis.

One looked at another, and then the words broke forth: "The Iroquois! The Iroquois! They have taken the town! They are burning it to the ground!"

The alarm was given to all in the fort, and white lips asked the vain question, "Where are Brébeuf and Lalemant? What has happened to them?"

But they must not spend time in anxious queries. The victorious Iroquois might be already on the march to Sainte Marie, and hurried preparations must be made to resist them.

"Bring in the women and children from the palisades," was the order. "We cannot defend them there. We must concentrate our forces."

Soldiers and traders hurried to a scene of terror and confusion. The sick and feeble imagined that their barbarous foes were already at their gates. The little ones had caught the infection of fear, and were screaming and clinging to their elders. The girls from the lodge, with some of the women, were trying to pacify and encourage the terrified crowd. Some young boys were running about excitedly, shouting their war cries. The older ones, who realized the gravity of the situation, had begun to make preparations for removal to the fort. But they were not ill-pleased at the prospect of a fight. They had been under military drill, and when a soldier sounded a call they responded, ran to the open space near him, and formed in line.

He directed the older ones to move the sick to the fort on sledges. The younger boys were ordered to assist in the removal of the little children or in carrying bundles. Provisions, bedding, and

clothing were strapped on the backs of boys and girls, and the march began.

In a short time every inhabitant of the palisades was transferred to Sainte Marie. Then, when the scouts reported that no Iroquois were in sight, some went to and fro carrying food and light furniture to the fort. The siege might be long, and the Iroquois would probably burn the palisades.

The women and children were assigned to the lodges which were, in times of peace, for the use of visiting Hurons. The older boys were instructed and made ready for action in case of attack. There were about forty Frenchmen, well armed, in the fort.

They would gladly have gone to the rescue of the priests of St. Louis. It was terrible to wait in the fort, not knowing what had happened and unable to help those whom they loved so well. But distant war-whoops had told them that they had surmised truly; the Iroquois had been victorious, and the handful of men, were they rash enough to attempt the rescue, would but serve to whet the thirst for blood of those who were drunk with victory.

Presently two runners, spent and breathless, approached the gates. They were recognized as Christian Hurons, and admitted. They brought news of the attack on St. Louis and the capture of St. Ignace. Some of their companions had escaped from the mission soon after the attack had been

begun, and had set out to try to make their way through the forests to St. Jean and St. Matthias, the far-away missions of the Tobacco Nation. The two priests at St. Louis had refused to fly, and the fugitives knew nothing of their fate.

St. Ignace, St. Louis, and three other villages, formed the mission of which Brébeuf and Lalemant had charge. St. Ignace was defended on three sides by a deep ravine, and strengthened by palisades fifteen or sixteen feet high. On the fourth side it was protected by palisades alone, and these were often left unguarded. A great part of the population had abandoned the town, believing it to be too much exposed to the enemy. At the time of the attack there were about four hundred people, for the most part women, children, and old men, in the place. The warriors were hunting, or on scalping parties against the Iroquois.

The foe had come on snowshoes through the forest, lurking in ambush when any were near who would carry an alarm. The blind, indifferent Hurons had not seen, or had not heeded, the prints in the snow. The enemy had silently approached St. Ignace in the night, stealthily peered about it through the darkness, and entered by the weakest side. There was no exit on the other sides, and only three Hurons escaped, followed in their flight by the shrieks and moans of the wounded and dying,

the unavailing cries and entreaties of women and children.

The conquerors smeared their faces with blood, left a guard to hold the town, and rushed in the early dawn toward St. Louis, about three miles distant.

About sunrise the inhabitants had been roused by wild yells without the walls. The three fugitives from St. Ignace were entreating for admittance and urging the people of St. Louis to escape. The greater number heeded the alarm, and fled to seek safety, but the old, sick, and decrepit were left helpless in the lodges.

Brébeuf had resisted the entreaties of his converts, and refused to forsake his place beside the helpless people. The sensitive and delicate Lalemant trembled, spite of his efforts for composure, yet he remained steadfastly by his colleague.

The Huron fugitives could not tell the anxious watchers at Sainte Marie a word of the present condition of the priests; but there was little room for hope that they had escaped capture—and capture, in the hands of the Iroquois, meant torture, if not death.

Some of the women went to the church to pray. And Dorothy, Protestant bred, prostrated herself before the altar, in agonized appeal for the brave, strong, tender man who was in deadly peril.

Amid their great anxiety the Fathers saw the

need for restoring order and calming fear. The children were roaming at will about the fort; some were crying for food, and the mothers were unmindful that any were hungry. The mothers and older girls were assembled, by order of the Superior, and instructed. Work must go on, discipline must be maintained, though conditions were changed and peril was at the gates. A large lodge was set apart as a schoolroom; the girls who had taught in the palisades were directed to resume their classes; others were appointed to help the mothers with the younger children. Arrangements were made for the daily supply of provisions, the preparation of meals; and the crowded lodges were divided, as well as possible, for the many families.

Nialona was commended for her fortitude and presence of mind. She was invaluable to the missionaries; she never appeared to shrink from a duty; she was kind, in her way, especially to those who submitted to her without question; but Dorothy found her dictatorial, and Nialona felt that Dorothy should show more gratitude for all the care she had received in her illness. Dorothy had tried to be truly grateful, but something in the hardness of Nialona's nature repelled her.

The missionaries were surprised by her apparent calmness. She was very pale, but made no expression of alarm, and went about the duties assigned to her in a remarkably quiet and orderly

way. Apart from her distress for Brébeuf's sake, the peril and excitement seemed almost a relief from the misery of her own thoughts. For the time they took her out of herself.

Toward evening the men on the watch-towers saw the Iroquois scouts prowling along the borders of the forest. The lamps were kept burning all night, and all night, in the chapel and in the residence, prayer was said by one or another. The festival of St. Joseph was at hand. Each priest made a vow to say a mass in his honor every month for a year; others bound themselves by vows to various penances.

Early in the morning a dark, moving body was seen in the distance, and the cry went forth that the Iroquois were at hand. But, before long, friendly faces were recognized. Three hundred warriors, who were chiefly converts from the missions of La Conception and Sainte Madeleine, arrived at the fort, and reported that others were coming to aid in the defence. They were fairly well armed, and eager to fight. Several bands of them took posts by the passes of the forest, hoping to waylay parties of the enemy.

But a short time passed before the watchers in the fort heard the cries of battle. Two hundred Iroquois, who had made their way from St. Ignace to begin the attack on the fort, came on one of the Huron bands, slaughtered many, and put the rest

to flight. Those who escaped fled to seek refuge in Sainte Marie. But their cries had brought their comrades to their rescue. In their turn they routed the Iroquois, who ran for St. Louis, with the victors at their heels. The houses had been burned and the inhabitants killed or taken bound to St. Ignace; but the palisades, though breached and broken, might avail for defence.

The pursuing Hurons came upon them, and were again victorious. But some of the Iroquois who escaped ran on toward St. Ignace and joined the main body. Then all the enraged warriors hastened back to St. Louis for revenge.

So many Hurons had been killed or disabled that the force within the broken palisades did not much exceed one hundred and fifty. For weapons they had bows and arrows, war-clubs, hatchets, knives, and a few guns. The Iroquois had a larger force, and most of the men were armed with guns. But the Hurons fought with the courage of despair, and drove back their assailants time after time. Forgetful of caution, they made repeated sallies. Darkness came on, but yell answered yell, and fierce sally was met by desperate resistance. The battle, which was one of the fiercest in Indian annals, continued far into the night; but at last the Iroquois prevailed. Their principal chief was wounded, nearly one hundred of their warriors had been killed, and their prize was only about twenty

wounded and exhausted Hurons. The others lay dead about the broken palisades.

The scouts from Sainte Marie, listening under the pines, heard the din of battle rising far into the night. Again the lamps burned all night in the fort, and the defenders watched, muskets in hand.

And all the next day they watched, but not an Iroquois appeared. A strange stillness, which seemed ominous, succeeded the turmoil, and the Father Superior wrote, "It was as if the country were waiting, palsied with fright, for some new disaster."

XI.

Martyrdom. Farewell Message of Brébeuf

Days passed before the Fathers at Sainte Marie heard the story of the martyrdom of their companions.

On the fateful morning the few warriors who had remained for the defence of St. Louis had sung their war songs, and resolved to hold it to the last.

The sun had just risen when the Iroquois, stained with the blood of their victims at St. Ignace, came yelling to the assault. Yell was met by yell, shot by shot. The Hurons fought bravely. Twice they drove back the Iroquois; twice the Iroquois, like wild beasts that have tasted blood, renewed their ferocious charge. They hacked the palisades with their hatchets, cut through them at several points, and there was a deadly fight at the breaches.

At last the Iroquois broke in and captured the surviving defenders. They set the town on fire, and the sick and feeble were consumed in the burning dwellings. They stripped and bound Brébeuf and Lalemant, and drove them with the other prisoners to St. Ignace. There all turned out and savagely beat the two priests with sticks and clubs

till they entered the town. Then they left them for a time. They had other work in hand. The torture could wait. The victors divided themselves into bands to burn the neighboring villages and hunt those who fled.

But on the afternoon of that day, the sixteenth of March, they found time to wreak their vengeance on the Jesuit Fathers. They led Brébeuf apart and bound him to a stake; but they could not bind his dauntless spirit. In a loud voice he urged the captive converts to endure with patience; their trials would be short, and Heaven would be their reward.

As he stood there he saw a band of Christian Huron lads of St. Ignace. Their captors hoped to torment them by the sight of the last agonies of the priests.

"O, Father, Father," they cried, "our hearts suffer for you!"

He knew that their lives would probably be spared; that they would be adopted into the families of the Iroquois.

"My sons," he said, "stand fast in the Faith. Wherever you go, whatever may befall you, trust in God and keep your souls pure."

His thoughts flew to another young soul in peril. The remembrance of his last meeting with her, of his anxiety for her and the young man whom he loved as a son, moved him as no dread of his own fate could move; and he lifted up his heart in prayer

for the soul of the girl and the soul of the man who loved her. In that love there was danger and sorrow for both. He knew, too, that the girl was oppressed by some secret which she could not or would not speak, perhaps some mystery of her past, some wrong of others for which she was not accountable. He had hoped to see her again, perhaps to hear her confession; if not, at least to give her some comfort and counsel; but it had been ordained that she should never again receive help from him. In the few moments when his captors left him bound while they prepared other victims for the torture his thoughts seemed luminous; his hopes and fears, his questionings and their answers, flashed before him.

Perhaps one or more of the lads might escape, might see Léon or Dorothy. He would give a message, though it might never be delivered.

The boys had learned a little French, and he spoke to them in that language, so the enemy should not understand.

“My sons,” he said, “if you see again your white sister at the fort, tell her that in the hour of my death I remembered my promise to speak with her again. She will know that I could not fulfil it, but I send her my last words. Tell her that, in dying, I prayed for her, prayed that her heart might trust in God, that she might find strength and peace.

“And, my lads, there is another to whom I would

send a message, one whom you know well, the Brother Léon de Charolais. Tell him from me that my thoughts were with him in my last hours, that I loved him to the end. Tell him I prayed he might inherit the blessings of God, promised to him that overcometh. I held him in my arms, lads, when he was an infant; and he is very dear to me."

The tormentors returned. Brébeuf had hardly time to give a brief message for the Fathers at the fort, when the angry Iroquois, seeking to silence him, scorched him from head to foot. But, without flinching, he continued his exhortations to his fellow captives. They cut away his lower lip, and thrust a red hot iron down his throat; but he held himself erect and dauntless.

He would not yield nor show sign of suffering for any torture they could devise for his body, and they sought to overcome him through his sympathies.

They tied strips of bark, smeared with pitch, about the naked body of Lalemant, and led him out that Brébeuf might witness his sufferings.

Poor Lalemant could not conceal his agitation at the condition of his Superior. Throwing himself at Brébeuf's feet, he cried, in a broken voice, "We are made a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men."

The Iroquois seized him, fastened him to a stake, and set fire to the enveloping bark. Throwing his

arms upward, he cried aloud to Heaven. Throughout his tortures, at times, he seemed beside himself; but he rallied, and with uplifted hands offered his sufferings as a sacrifice.

The tormentors hung round Brébeuf's neck a collar of hatchets, heated red hot, but he stood unmoved.

"Pour hot water on their heads," cried a renegade Huron, who had been adopted by the Iroquois; "they have poured so much cold water on the heads of others."

The savages slowly poured the boiling water on the heads of the two missionaries, exclaiming, "We baptize you, that you may be happy in Heaven; for nobody can be saved without a good baptism."

"We wish to make you happy," cried other renegade Hurons. "You have told us that the more one suffers on earth, the happier he is in Heaven. We torment you because we love you, and you ought to thank us for it."

Through revolting tortures Brébeuf repressed all sign of suffering. At last, seeing him nearly dead, they laid open his breast, and the warriors drank his blood, believing they might imbibe some of his courage.

The slender Lalemant lingered for hours after the death of his robust companion, until an Iroquois put an end to his sufferings with the blow of a hatchet.

Brébeuf had many times expressed his desire to die for the Faith. He had bound himself by a vow never to refuse the grace of martyrdom, but to accept it at the hand of God with all the contentment and joy of his heart.

It is said that he came of the race from which sprang the English Earls of Arundel. The courage of a noble line, the enthusiasm of a devotee, enabled this soldier of the Cross to meet the most excruciating tortures and a terrible death with almost matchless heroism.

XII

The Search for the Dead

On the nineteenth of March, the festival of St. Joseph, some fugitive Indians arrived at Sainte Marie in great excitement. The Iroquois at St. Ignace had been seized with a panic, believing that the Hurons were coming upon them in force. The chiefs had been unable to control them, and they were about to abandon the place.

The news was true. But before they retreated the savages committed another atrocity. They planted stakes in the bark houses, and bound to them all the prisoners whom they did not wish to preserve alive. Old men, women, and young children were placed side by side. Then they set fire to the town, and yelled with delight as the shrieks of their victims rose from the burning dwellings.*

They loaded the stronger prisoners with plunder,

* "The site of St. Ignace still bears evidence of the catastrophe in the ashes and charcoal that indicate the position of the houses, and the fragments of broken pottery, and half consumed bone, together with trinkets of stone, metal, or glass, which have survived the lapse of two centuries and more. The place has been minutely examined by Dr. Taché."

—PARKMAN.

and drove them through the forests southward, killing any who gave out on the march.

An old woman, who had escaped from the flames of St. Ignace, made her way through the forest to St. Michel, a large town not far from the ruins of St. Joseph. St. Joseph, or Teanaustaye, had been the mission of Father Daniel, who had been martyred by the Iroquois on the 4th of July, 1648. She found at St. Michel about seven hundred Huron warriors, and set them on the track of the retreating enemy. But they could not, or would not, overtake them, and after two days gave up the attempt.

Other fugitives from the burned towns, instead of seeking Sainte Marie, followed those who had fled from St. Louis to the towns of the Tobacco Nation in the Blue Mountains. They struggled through the soft snow in the forest until they reached Lake Huron, which was still covered by the treacherous ice of spring. They ventured upon it, and travelled all that day and the following night until, cold and starving, they found their refuge.

On the morning of the twentieth a priest from the fort, with seven soldiers, set out for the ruins of St. Ignace. They found there the half-consumed bodies of those who had perished in the burned dwellings, and horrors upon horrors. At last, apart from the rest, they came upon the scorched and mangled remains of the martyr priests.

They had been told of their death, of their tortures, but the sight renewed their grief and horror. With breaking hearts they took up the bodies and carried them to Sainte Marie. They were buried in the cemetery, but the skull of Brébeuf was preserved as a relic.

The danger of an Iroquois attack had passed for the time, and the inhabitants of the palisades returned to their homes. The evening after the burial Nialona and Dorothy were standing near Kishik's lodge, watching a wonderful aurora. Its brilliant coruscations of many hues seemed to shoot up from beyond the forests on all sides, uniting in a corona at the zenith.

"O, Dorothy, behold!" exclaimed Nialona. "See above you the symbol of their glory. It is the martyrs' crown!"

But Dorothy put her hands before her eyes. She could not look beyond the tortures of which she had heard to the joys of martyrdom. The brave and tender priest, whose sympathy had consoled her, whose strength would have supported her, had been, and now was not. Perhaps he lived elsewhere; but his words of counsel and strength would never again sound in her ears, unless she should some day reach that unknown land to which—so they told her—he had gone. But what was that far-off day to her who needed help and counsel in the sorrow of her youth?

Nialona was impatient with her companion's grief, and felt jealously that Dorothy was usurping her privileges. The stranger had seen the good Father but twice. What right had she to go refusing to be comforted? Nialona had been instructed by him, had helped him, had often received his commendation for faithful work; yet she was bearing her bereavement with resignation.

But that night the bitterness of Dorothy's sorrow was softened. A priest came from the fort with one of the Huron boys who had escaped from St. Ignace, and, calling her apart from Nialona, gave her the last message of Father Brébeuf.

Far off, pacing back and forth under the gloomy pines near St. Matthias, was Léon de Charolais. He, too, had heard that last message from one who had sought refuge in the distant town. Beyond the forest he, too, saw the lances of light shooting upward in the northern sky. But the coronal splendor had no significance to him of the martyrs' crown. What proof had he of any life hereafter? Schools of philosophy had argued that the soul of man is mortal. Perhaps they were right, and who could tell? He was by nature sceptical, and his rebellion against the life which he had not chosen, and which he found so irksome, had deepened his scepticism. Yet, was it possible that a credulous acceptance of a myth had given the man, Brébeuf, the strength to overcome and transform his nature?

He was brave; with faith, or without, he would have died as a hero. But it was the inspiring faith within him that enabled him to live as a saint. Léon groaned aloud when he remembered their last parting. Anywhere, under any circumstances, it would have been hard to lose such a friend; but, in the lonely wilderness, where friends were few, where none understood him, where some whom he might have made his friends had come to mistrust him, his life seemed void and desolate indeed.

The missionaries of St. Jean—Charles Garnier and Noël Chabanel—men who, like the other Huron missionaries, had been chosen from the purest of their order—had treated him with kindness. But he believed that information of the reasons why he had been transferred had been sent to them, and he was sensitive of criticism. Garreau and Grelon at St. Matthias had apparently little confidence in him. Without companionship, with little faith, and full of distaste for his work, the dreariness of his life oppressed him so that at times it seemed unbearable. And into that dreariness would come the vision of the lovely girl, of the happiness that might have been; and he could not shut it out. He had no interest in the world without; he dreaded to turn to that within him. As in duty bound, he recited prayers and spiritual exercises from the breviary—they were naught to him but empty words. Work was his sole refuge, and he

worked with the energy of despair. Even Garnier remonstrated with him against exhausting his strength.

Garnier was devoted to the mission. He was the favorite child of wealthy and noble parents, and had been nursed in ease and luxury. Yet, though his constitution was delicate, he contented himself with wretched fare, living in times of famine on roots and acorns. When the country was infested by the enemy he would walk thirty or forty miles in midsummer to baptize some dying Indian. And he had often passed the night alone in the forest in the depth of winter when on some similar errand. He was anxious to fall into the hands of the Iroquois, that he might preach the Faith to them even out of the midst of the fire.

Yet Garnier sent a communication to the Superior that De Charolais was undermining his strength by exhausting labors; that his zeal led him to overrate his youthful endurance; that he had grown pale and emaciated, and should be restrained from such reckless drafts on his constitution.

But the Superior did not desire to restrain him. He believed that a passion that expressed itself by such abnormal activity would soon wear itself out, that Léon would cease to trouble himself about the girl, and would settle down to orderly devotion to his work.

XIII

Anxious Times

Within two weeks from the destruction of St. Ignace and St. Louis, fifteen Huron towns were abandoned, and the greater number burned lest they give shelter to the Iroquois. The Hurons had been seized by despair; they seemed incapable of defence; their one desire was for flight. They had no thought of provision for the future; they left their fields untilled, and roamed the wilderness half starved; for there had been a poor harvest in the previous year. Some sought refuge on the rocky islands of the bay; others had gone to the Tobacco Nation; a few wandered as far as the Neutrals on the north shore of Lake Erie.

The Fathers had hoped that their mission would be the beginning of a glorious work, that the savage tribes would become sons of the Church, and their land, by peaceful conquest, the heritage of France. But now the Hurons, dispersed and broken, had ceased to exist as a nation; the chronicles thereafter told only of a vanishing people.

All the fortified towns between Sainte Marie and the Iroquois country had been destroyed, some by

the enemy, some by their own people; that fort stood alone. The Jesuits took counsel, and resolved to abandon the beloved place. The people were scattered, the neighboring missions were in ruins; to remain would be folly; they were ready for martyrdom, if necessary; but they had no right to court it and senselessly expose life that might have fields of usefulness elsewhere. For a time they felt almost crushed by the disappointment; but they rallied.

Father Ragueneau wrote: "Since the birth of Christianity the Faith has nowhere been planted except in the midst of suffering and crosses. Thus this desolation consoles us; and in the midst of persecution, in the extremity of the evils which assail us, and the greater evils which threaten us, we are all filled with joy: for our hearts tell us that God has never had a more tender love for us than now."

Several priests followed the scattered Hurons. One shared the roving of his half-starved converts through the thickets and mountains. Another, embarking in a canoe, sought his despairing people among the rocks and islands of Lake Huron northward. The remaining priests, after taking counsel at Sainte Marie, determined to establish a new mission on the Grand Manitoulin Island, to which the Hurons gave the name Ekaentoton. It would bring them nearer the French settlements by the

route of the Ottawa, and to Algonquin tribes along the borders of the lake. The soil was productive and the fishing good.

But after they had resolved to transfer their mission a number of Huron chiefs arrived and begged for an interview. They informed the missionaries that many of their people had determined to reunite and form a settlement on the Island of Ahoendoé, called by the Jesuits Isle St. Joseph. They urged the Jesuits to join them, and gave the Superior ten collars of wampum, saying that these were the voices of their wives and children. After a conference of three hours the Jesuits agreed to abandon their plan of a settlement on the Manitoulin Island and to join the Hurons at Ahoendoé.

Notwithstanding the anxiety and uncertainty, daily duties in the palisades were conducted in an orderly way. Nialona and Dorothy taught the children and helped the women in the care of the lodges as if they were to remain permanently in their homes. The Fathers knew too well the value of discipline and regularity to permit any marked relaxation on account of troublous times. A large number of Hurons from the deserted villages had come to the fort for shelter, and there was much work for all hands to do.

When the ice had gone from the lakes and river, the young people were allowed to paddle their canoes for a short distance, if the scouts reported that

no Iroquois had been seen lurking in the neighborhood. But they never ventured far, and the groups kept together. They were allowed to ramble in the neighboring woods, and gather wild flowers for the decoration of the church and hospital.

Nialona grieved at the prospect of leaving Sainte Marie, where she had spent happy days. But Dorothy, to whom the place was so bitterly associated with tragedy and sorrow, believed that the change could, at least, bring nothing worse.

In one respect, the agitation had been the means of a respite to her. Either because they judged it to be the wiser course, or because their attention was turned to affairs of more immediate importance, the Fathers had ceased to ask any questions regarding her past, and appeared content for the present to leave her undisturbed in her heretical views. They said among themselves that her conduct, her obedience to their wishes, were exemplary; and they were unable at the time to form any tenable plans for her future.

XIV

In Peril in the Ruins

On a sunny afternoon Dorothy and Washaka set out in their canoe. They meant to paddle but a short distance; but Washaka was venturesome, and Dorothy's heart was lighter than usual; so they went on heedlessly, until Dorothy suddenly exclaimed, in her broken French, "Washaka, what shore is this? We have come far. We must return."

Washaka laughed. "We go on shore, walk but a little way, and find St. Ignace. What say you? My desire is to behold it. I make fast the canoe by yonder tree. The walk is not long. Your strength is more with you of late. If you weary, lean on me."

Dorothy shuddered. She did not wish to see the place of horrors. But Washaka was determined. "Come; if you come not, I leave you here, and go alone. I fear nothing. Do you say you return with the canoe? What of that? I walk. That walk, a few miles, what is it? But you, you fear to be alone. You cannot use the paddle to return so far.

Your arm has not the strength. Come with me. What fear you?"

Dorothy hesitated, and Washaka, laughing scornfully, sprang ashore, almost upsetting the light canoe. She began to run up the bank. Washaka was right; Dorothy was afraid to be left alone. "Washaka, Washaka," she cried, "come to me. I go with you."

Washaka returned, caught the canoe, and drew it ashore.

The two set out together; but long before they reached the ruins Dorothy was very weary. Her steps lagged, and Washaka had little patience with weakness. The Huron girl was swift and strong; she had often walked from one mission to another, but to drag her companion, who appeared quite exhausted, back to the canoe would be no easy matter. Besides, she had made up her mind to see the ruins.

When they at last arrived in sight of the charred dwellings, Dorothy begged to be allowed to remain outside of the enclosure, which was blackened and broken.

But Washaka insisted that she would not return that way. She would walk through the ruined village, and take a shorter cut to the water.

So Dorothy followed, in helpless submission. The sights she saw made her sick with horror. But Washaka shrugged her shoulders.

"What matters it now? They were baptized, all of them. Do not the priests tell us that they who have been baptized may pass through the fires of the enemy and be happy and safe forevermore?"

Washaka lingered, examining the ruins, the charred remains of some who had been her friends, with a curiosity and an absence of sensitiveness that Dorothy could not comprehend, though she had seen many exhibitions of stolidity on the part of the Huron women. She tried to avoid the revolting scenes as far as possible.

When Washaka was ready to go the sun had dropped behind the pines, and though Dorothy had rested on a log, she felt that it would be almost impossible for her to walk to the river.

Washaka was alarmed when she realized that darkness would soon come on. Their absence would be noticed, and they would surely be reprimanded on their return. "Come," she said, pulling on Dorothy's arm, "you can walk if you will. You must haste, or I leave you alone."

Dorothy was so anxious that she did not attempt to argue with her unreasonable companion, but did her best to keep pace with her quick steps. But the effort was useless. She was too weak.

"I cannot, I cannot, Washaka," she said, stopping abruptly, and sinking wearily to the ground. "My head is dizzy. My heart beats fast. I cannot breathe. I must, I must, rest."

"Rest, then," said Washaka, angrily; "rest all night if you will, but I go on; and the Iroquois may come and carry you away if they yet linger near."

She ran off, as she had run up the bank; but Dorothy could not follow. She clasped her arms round a slender tree and leaned her swimming head against it. In a brief unconsciousness she forgot her fears.

But Washaka knew that she dare not return to the palisades without her companion. She returned, and found that Dorothy had slipped from the log and was lying on the ground in a half fainting condition; she realized at last that the white stranger was physically incapable of further effort.

They had had nothing to eat since noon; perhaps she could find some food in the ruins. She stooped over the fainting girl. "Dorothy, rouse," she cried. "I leave you but a few moments, and seek bread for you to eat. Fear not; I will return."

She ran quickly to St. Ignace, and peered about in the gathering darkness. Presently she saw a bag on the ground. It had probably been dropped by one of the Iroquois in the retreat. It contained some dried venison and a few cakes of pounded maize. It was not very appetizing, and Dorothy was fastidious; but she would eat to gain strength. After further search, she found an earthen vessel, which she filled with water from a spring. She had

hoped to discover a rug or blanket, in which she might wrap her shivering companion, for the spring night was cold; but she could see nothing of the kind. Dorothy was warmly clad, but she appeared to be chilled.

When she returned, Dorothy was still lying on the ground.

"Drink, Dorothy, drink," she said, stooping over her.

As Dorothy did not move, she sat down beside her, raised her head and held the water to her lips.

Dorothy drank a little, and revived so that she sat up wearily.

Washaka propped her against the log, and gave her a bit of venison and a hard maize cake. Had Dorothy seen the dirty bag, perhaps she would have refused it; she tried to eat it, but it was too dry and hard. Then Washaka soaked a cake in water, and put it into her mouth, bit by bit.

After eating, she felt better, and said she would try to walk.

They rose and went a few yards, when they heard a crackling of branches at some distance behind them. Washaka put her arm round Dorothy and peered back. She saw a dark figure that stooped when she turned. Had it been a friend from the fort, he would have hastened on or called to her. Her quick instinct told her it was an enemy. Perhaps Iroquois spies were still in the neighborhood.

They were not far from the deep ravine near St. Ignace. The Huron girl knew the place well. She had lived for a time at St. Ignace, and she and her friends had played their Indian form of the game of hide and seek. She could find a hiding-place in the dark where perhaps even the keenest Iroquois could not follow.

It went through her mind in a flash. "Dorothy," she whispered hoarsely; "we must run, run. It is for our lives."

She put her arm around Dorothy's waist again, and half dragged her. But she felt they were not running fast enough. She heard the footsteps behind them. They might make more speed if they were separated. "Dorothy," she gasped, "I must let go. You hinder me. Keep close to me. Run for your life. We shall escape."

Fear lent Dorothy strength, and she followed her companion swiftly down the steep ravine; too swiftly, for she tripped and fell, and rolled almost to the bottom. But she picked herself up and, unmindful of bruises, pressed on.

Washaka caught her hand, and pulled her, "Come, there is a place to hide, a hollow tree. There is room for you alone. Do not move; make not a sound. For myself, I find another place. Wait where I leave you till I come for you. If you stir, you are lost."

Dorothy obeyed. The tree was one of a group,

and if Washaka had not known it well she could not have found it in the darkness. There was no sound from their pursuer. Perhaps he had feared to venture down the ravine. For aught he knew, other Hurons might be there.

Washaka crawled into a hollow beneath some logs. Dorothy crouched; she had not strength to stand upright; the space was small, and she was seized with dread lest she should be pinned there. After awhile she heard voices and footsteps. Perhaps the man had gone back for his friends. The voices were low; but when two men passed close beside the group of trees where she was concealed, she knew by their speech that they were Indians, but not Hurons. She feared the beating of her heart, her breathing, might betray her; but her hiding-place escaped their vigilance, and they went on. After awhile they returned. This time they had a light, a smoking torch of wood. Dorothy was cold with dread. She knew too well of the keen sight, the quick perception, of these savages. The ravine was rocky here; they might not see footprints; but they would surely notice that the branches had been moved. She could see the light of the torch on their dark, eager faces; but the trunks of the other trees concealed her. The men passed on, and apparently went to search in other directions.

Washaka did not come to her. The Huron girl

feared that silence was intended to deceive them, and that the men might be watching in the neighborhood.

When an hour had passed without a sound from their pursuers, she crept from her hiding-place and sought Dorothy. She called her softly, but heard no answer. Then she forced her way in between the thickly growing trees—she had wondered in other days how they had found nurture in that inhospitable ground—and looked into the hollow; but Dorothy was not there.

Was it possible that she had been discovered and carried away without a sound?

“Dorothy, Dorothy,” she cried, forgetting caution in her alarm.

She was relieved by hearing Dorothy’s voice, and presently the girl crawled from beneath a heap of brushwood.

“I had to move, Washaka,” she explained. “There seemed no air to breathe. I felt I was buried alive. It was terrible. I think had I stayed there, I should have died. When the men had gone, when all was quiet, I crept out.”

Washaka did not scold, as Dorothy had expected she would. “We must haste,” she said. “They went to the south. It may be we can reach the river, and find our canoe.”

They went through the ravine to the north for some distance, moving as swiftly as they could, and

listening keenly; but no one appeared to be in pursuit.

When they left the ravine, they had not far to go to find the river, and presently, to their great joy, they saw their canoe, fastened to the overhanging tree, as they had left it.

It was a peaceful night. The wind sighed gently through the forest, and the stars shone in a clear sky.

They began to be more hopeful. Washaka paddled swiftly, and Dorothy rested.

They wondered why they met no one of their own people. Surely their absence had been discovered, and men were in search for them.

XV

Barred Out

When they left the river, they were nearer the fort than the palisades. As they were sure their absence must have been reported to the Fathers, and that they could not in any case escape censure, they determined to go boldly to the gate and announce their return.

Washaka judged from the position of the stars that it was about midnight; but, even for that hour, the place was strangely dark and silent. A horror of some calamity seized them. Yet had there been a battle with the Iroquois, there would have been some trace of it in the neighborhood. The only signs of fight they had seen were those left from the late skirmishes, with which Washaka had quickly become familiarized.

“Let us go on to the palisades,” said Washaka. “Strange it seems, yet something has happened so they have not missed us.”

They kept close to the walls till they reached a corner where they found a path to the neighboring enclosure. They walked quickly across the open

space, seeing no one, hearing nothing, hoping and dreading.

To their surprise, the gate stood open!

The place appeared to be deserted. There was not a light in the hospital windows; there was no smoke from any chimney. Washaka went to the lodge that was usually occupied by several families. The door was ajar; the lodge was empty.

"O, Washaka, what has happened?" asked Dorothy.

"What know I?" replied Washaka. "We look, may be we find."

But every lodge that they passed appeared equally desolate. Presently they arrived at Kish-ik's house. The doors and windows were barred; there was not a glimmer of lamp or fire within. They knocked loudly; but there was no answer.

Washaka pointed to the open door of a neighboring lodge. "Come," she said, "we make the door fast, we find some blankets, we rest till morning."

They did not know what danger lurked near. But Dorothy was so weary that she was apathetic, and she followed the Indian girl.

They groped along the walls, and when their eyes became accustomed to the darkness, they saw a heap in the corner, which they supposed to be some fur rugs.

Had Dorothy been less exhausted, she would not

have dared to creep about in the darkness in the face of the unaccountable desertion of the lodges. But she held Washaka's hand, and went on.

Washaka stooped to feel the dark heap, but started back in affright. She had placed her hand on a man's face. Terrified though she was, she did not scream. Without a word, she clutched Dorothy's hand and pulled her out.

Dorothy understood the movement, and knew well that Washaka's action betokened danger.

Washaka divined that the man had not been asleep. He had almost held his breath till their approach. His stillness had a purpose.

Before they reached the door, he had risen and was following them.

Fast as their feet could fly they went over the ground till they reached the gate. He seemed bewildered, and they gained on him.

When they arrived at the gate, they were several yards in advance.

"Quick, Dorothy!" cried Washaka, breathlessly, "we will bar it."

With all their strength they pushed it in, and Washaka fastened the outer bolt. It had been arranged so it could be fastened from without as well as from within. The outer bolt was a secret device, not readily discoverable by strangers. In times of danger a guard from the fort fastened it after the inhabitants had retired.

The man gave a howl of rage, and the girls sped on to the fort. But presently they heard a strange, blood-curdling laugh. They turned, and saw their pursuer not many yards behind them. They had fastened the gate securely, and the palisade wall was high. But he had evidently found some way to climb it, or had wedged himself through some opening of which they were not aware.

In their hurried glance, they saw a wild-looking creature, almost naked, his tangled black hair covering him to the waist. He was gesticulating wildly, and making unintelligible sounds. As they ran, the girls began to shout and shriek in appeal to the inmates of the fort.

"Let us in, let us in. Open to us, open, open. It is Dorothy! It is Washaka!"

But the man gained on them.

"Nialona! Kishik! O, Father, Father, open to us! Let us in!"

Dorothy's abundant red-gold hair had escaped from its combs, and was floating behind her as she ran. They had just reached the gate, when the savage made a grasp for the hair. Dorothy felt a sharp pain at the roots. She believed he meant to tear it out, and half turned to him, holding up her hands imploringly.

But he was laughing and jabbering; he let the golden tress fall over his arm, and patted it with one hand; even by night he could see that it was fair.

The gate swung back. The girls and their pursuer had been seen from the watch-tower.

A crowd of men had been roused by the cries, and had rushed to the gate. Dorothy fell almost fainting at Father Ragueneau's feet, and Washaka was so spent that but for the strong arm of a trader she would have fallen. The wild creature had rushed in after them, and the sword of a soldier was lifted to strike, when the blow was arrested by Father Bressani's hand.

"Harm not the man," he commanded. "He is but a poor, mad creature. Some trouble has crazed his brain."

The wild eyes looked from one to another.

"Victor Caradeuc and Jules Venette," said the Superior, in a low voice, "lead him away; watch and guard him, lest he harm anything; but use no violence."

The creature fought and struggled when they laid hands on him, and howled so dismally that, unmindful of the Superior's orders, his guards opened the gate, and thrust him out, when he at once darted across the clearing.

One of the Hurons said he was an insane man who had wandered about the country for years. No one knew how he lived, but he was harmless. The Fathers knew that among the Indians insanity is supposed to be endowed with supernatural powers; so this man, who was looked upon as an *oki*

had not been molested by any tribe. The Hurons believed he would bring good luck to the fort, and two ran after him to try to persuade him to return. But he fled swiftly; he had taken fright when the Frenchmen seized him. His pursuers returned, brought out some provisions from a lodge in the fort, and laid them on the ground outside the walls, motioning to the madman that he might eat and no one would harm him.

One of the priests had lifted Dorothy from the ground, and was leading her toward the lodge where Kishik and Nialona were, when Raoul Hauteroche approached.

"Mademoiselle Dorothee is too ill to walk, Father," he said; "with your permission, I will carry her."

"You have a strong arm, Raoul," replied the priest.

Hauteroche chose to look on this as a permission, and lifted Dorothy in his arms. She was so weak that she made no resistance; and her head fell on his shoulder.

Washaka followed closely, bitterly jealous and angry. Raoul had taken advantage of every opportunity to pay her attention, and she admired the handsome and bold young trader.

The priest had turned back for a moment, and Raoul bent his head and laid his bearded cheek against Dorothy's. She shuddered and drew away.

"How dare you?" she said. "I will walk. Take your arms from me. Put me on the ground."

"Nay, nay," he said, softly. "I meant no harm. Your breathing was so low I feared you had swooned again. I did but stoop to see."

Dorothy knew that he lied. But she was silent, and endured the clasp of his arms till she reached the lodge. She did not want to do anything to excite Washaka's jealous suspicions.

When Washaka knocked, Nialona opened the door. She had been lying down, but had not undressed. Dorothy had dreaded meeting her. Both of the girls knew she would reproach them. But the Superior and Father Bressani had followed closely to hear their story, and Victor Caradeuc was at hand, pleased to find excuse to see Nialona; so she cried only, "What has happened? O, the terrible hours we have passed, not knowing where you were!"

"Many are in search of you," said the Superior, "great though the peril is, for the Iroquois are near."

Washaka told her story briefly, omitting all reference to her part in insisting that Dorothy should go with her; and Dorothy was silent.

When the girls had left the palisades, they had said they were going to the woods on the west to gather flowers, and the search had been made in that direction. Late in the afternoon, alarming

reports of the neighborhood of a body of Iroquois had led the Fathers to order the inhabitants of the palisades to take refuge in the fort. Nialona had been anxious about Dorothy's long absence, but in the hurry of moving Kishik and the household goods to Sainte Marie she had neglected to mention it. Then she and some of the boys had begun to search in the neighborhood; but every one had been ordered to return to the fort, and remain there.

By that time it was dusk, and she sent word to the Superior. René le Breton and a number of men set out at once, but found no trace of the wanderers. They had returned to the fort several times to inquire if any tidings had arrived, and had then set forth again. They had not been seen in the neighborhood for more than an hour, and their friends had become anxious, fearing they might have fallen into some Iroquois trap. The inmates of the fort had kept very quiet, with a desire to deceive the Iroquois into a belief that no special watch had been set.

"You have done very wrong," said the Superior, addressing his remarks to Dorothy. "You have caused us terrible anxiety, and risked the lives of some of our bravest men, for whom we are now in grave fear. But you are ill and weary. Rest now if you can, and to-morrow we will talk of your disobedience."

Dorothy held up her hands imploringly, and then broke into violent sobbing.

Bressani looked pained. "Ah, you are very young yet, and the young will be thoughtless. You will remember the consequences of your folly, and will not give us such trouble again. Do not weep so, child. The good Father is not angry. He meant only to warn you."

"But Monsieur le Breton and the men with him may come to harm."

"They cannot be harmed unless the good God permits it," replied Bressani. "Pray for them, my child, as we have all prayed, that it be His holy will to bring them back in safety."

Hauteroche scowled darkly. Dorothy's anxiety for René le Breton was not agreeable to him.

Presently a shout was heard. The priests and Hauteroche hastened from the lodge, and the others waited anxiously for news. Nialona went to the door and listened. She thought the searchers had returned.

"Washaka will remain in this lodge to-night," she said, coldly. "Dorothy, go to your bed. We will follow soon. You have already kept us waiting long."

Dorothy was willing to obey, and be out of reach of Nialona's reproaches. But presently there was a knock at the door, and Bressani came in.

"Be comforted, my child," he said, kindly, to

Dorothy, who had just risen and prepared to follow Nialona's instructions. "Our friends are safe. Fret no more; but sleep well. You have suffered. No one will say a word of blame to you further."

He looked at Nialona as he spoke. He was aware of her domineering ways. Then he went out, and Nialona remained sullenly silent.

XVI

A Feast of the Dead

Fears of another Iroquois attack passed away for the time. The scouts sought in vain for further signs of the enemy; and the inhabitants of the palisades returned once more to their dwellings. Preparations for departure went on; the daily tasks, the daily teaching, also went on with little interruption, until some of the people left the place to take part in a strange ceremony.

On a dark night, in a clearing, and under the shadow of the forest, numberless fires blazed. A multitude of people stood round a deep pit, some of them upon a scaffold, others below it, and flung the remains of their dead, in shapeless rolls, or effigies, adorned with beads and feathers, into the place of sepulture, where stood men, with long poles, arranging the bones and skeletons in their places. And from that great multitude there went up continually most dreary and discordant cries.

At intervals of from seven to twelve years, each of the four nations of the Huron Confederacy had been accustomed to collect the skeletons of its dead,

and deposit them in a place of sepulture common to all. Some of the bodies had lain on scaffolds for years. In a few cases, they had been buried in the earth.

Now, when villages were destroyed and tribes were scattered, the people could not come together as of old for the last rites for their kindred; but it was abhorrent to them to leave the bodies without proper burial. They resolved that before abandoning their country for the new settlement at Ahoendoé, they would bring together the skeletons which had so long awaited sepulture, and those which lay on the fields of recent battle, and hold their solemn Feast of the Dead. As far as possible the Jesuits had buried the bodies of their converts with the rites of their Church; but many who had asked the aid of the missionaries for their establishment at Ahoendoé were not converts, and practised their pagan ceremonies.

In the spring of 1636, Brébeuf and his associates had seen the weird death feast at the town of Ossossané, and regarded the display of mortality as so edifying that they summoned their French attendants to contemplate and profit by it. For a similar reason, when a Feast of the Dead was to be held within easy distance of Sainte Marie, the Fathers desired that not only the Frenchmen from the fort, but also some of the inhabitants of the palisades should attend it. Dorothy, Nialona, and

Washaka went with the party, under the care of a Huron woman who had married one of the French traders.

From scaffolds and graves where they had lain for years, from the forests and the battle-fields, corpses and bones were gathered. Men appointed for the purpose removed the coverings and arranged the remains in rows. These were surrounded by friends and relatives, who wept and howled. Then each family claimed its own, removed the flesh from the bones, tenderly caressed them, and wrapped them in skins with pendants of fur. The remains were removed to one of the largest houses, and hung to the cross-poles which supported the roof. A chief addressed the assembly, and squaws distributed food.

The corpses of those who had died recently were then laid on litters, and the bundles of bones were slung on the shoulders of relatives. They believed that these relics possessed feeling and consciousness, and while the procession made its way along the forest pathway voices were raised in dreary wails, for the comfort of the conscious remains. At the same time, similar processions were coming from other directions toward the ossuary.

The pit was in a large clearing, and had been dug in light soil. The preparations had necessarily been more hasty than usual. Around the deep pit stood a high and strong scaffolding, with many upright

poles and cross poles between, on which would be hung the funeral gifts and the remains.

When the chiefs gave the word to prepare for the ceremony, the bundles were opened for the last time, amid expressions of affection and lamentation. Presently the bones were taken up again, the processions moved in order toward the pit, and each went to the spot assigned to it. The funeral gifts, some of which were furs of great value, were displayed while the relics were resting on the ground. After a time, fires were lighted, the gifts were repacked, and the bones taken up by their bearers. At a signal, these bearers rushed toward the scaffold, scaled it by rude ladders, and hung their gifts with the relics on the poles. Chiefs, standing on the scaffold, addressed the crowd while a number of men were lining the pit with robes of beaver. Copper kettles, purposely damaged by having large holes knocked in the bottom with tomahawks, were placed in the middle. Then, here and there, copper and glass beads, wampum, pipes and pottery, copper and stone axes, and various utensils of Huron households, were scattered. The bodies of those who had recently died were brought to the edge of the pit and thrown in, and the Indians who stood in the gruesome cavern arranged them in order.

There was a horrible fascination in the scene for Nialona and the Huron women; but to Dorothy

the spectacle was so hideous that she longed to escape to the forest, and close her ears to the cries and her eyes to the ghastliness.

“No, Dorothy,” said Nialona; “you must not go. Do you not remember we are here by command of the Superior? Dorothy, you seek to put from you every thought of death. You fear to die. What wonder? Who would not dread to die without absolution, which you refuse? Look, Dorothy; turn not away, but look. Those flames, the deep pit, the dark forms, should bring to your soul the thought of the fires of hell—the fires that burn forever. Dorothy, you must think. If you think not, repent not; if you refuse to confess your sins, you will some day be flung to the everlasting fire, as those bodies are flung into the pit; and then you will find there is no escape.”

Nialona stood, with her hand outstretched, pointing, with forcible gestures, to the pit, and then, as it were, to Dorothy's soul. The Huron girl, often deeply stirred by human jealousies and human passions, was, in her way, a religious enthusiast. The child of a superstitious race, her zeal was fanatical at times, and she pursued Dorothy and her Huron sisters with appeals to repent and profess the true faith.

Warnings to turn to a new life and escape the everlasting fires came to Dorothy's ears with a familiar sound; but in other days they had never

been emphasized by such a vivid object lesson. Could her Puritan guardians have heard Nialona's exhortation, they would probably have regarded the Huron girl as an emissary of Satan, seeking to lure a soul to endless perdition.

Dorothy, white and sick with horror, clapped her hands over her ears.

Nialona, bent on applying her lesson, seized the hands and pulled them down. "Dorothy, Dorothy," she shouted, for the din had increased, "it is true; if you shut your ears to the truth, you will die in your sins. You will be tormented forever."

At that moment Dorothy looked up, and, across the flaming fires and the hideous pit, saw Léon de Charolais. With a body of Hurons who had fled to the Tobacco Nation, he had come to the death feast. Surrounded by the dark-skinned men, his tall, slight figure and fairer face were easily discernible. For the moment, Dorothy forgot Nialona's pleas and all the horror of the scene. He was looking at her; they might meet; yet he was far off, and there was a great crowd between them. It would be impossible for her to speak with him now; but the several processions would not return to their forest camps or their scattered homes until the next day; surely, they could not be so near and be obliged to part without a word.

But the Superior was standing not far from Dorothy. He was near enough to hear Nialona's

words, though she was not aware of it. He noticed Dorothy's start of surprise, the direction in which she turned her head; he followed her glance, and saw De Charolais.

A few moments later, Madame Couture, the Indian woman in whose care the girls had come to the place, touched Dorothy's arm. The Superior had sent word that she must go at once with her guardian to their camp, and remain there until the departure the following morning.

Rebellion was in Dorothy's heart, but she knew it would be useless. She turned from Madame Couture for a last look at Léon. Unmindful that the Superior was almost beside him, she made a sad little gesture of farewell with her hand, shook her head slowly, and turned away.

"Léon de Charolais, why are you here?" asked Father Ragueneau, in a tone that sent the blood to Léon's cheek.

"I came, Father, by command of Father Garnier. The men with me would not consent to forego paying the last respect to their dead. By Father Garnier's wish, I accompanied them. I bear a letter for you; but we were late in arriving; up to this moment I have had no opportunity to present it."

Ragueneau took the letter, which was written on birch bark, and the contents assured him that the young man had spoken the truth. Moreover, he could have had no reason to think that Dorothy

would attend the ceremony. She had not been informed of it until within a few hours of the time when the party set out from Sainte Marie. Even had she been able to elude the keen, suspicious eyes of Nialona—more vigilant than before since the wandering of Dorothy and Washaka—had she been able to write a letter on birch bark and deliver it to a messenger, such messenger, travelling on foot through the forest, must have had at least a two days' journey before he could reach St. Matthias. The evidence proved that De Charolais could not have been aware that he would see the girl.

“Father Garnier has done well, my son,” he said, mildly. “No other man could have been spared from the mission at this time. You will bear a few lines from me to St. Matthias in answer to this good letter.”

Dorothy was kept under vigilant guard; and before she was permitted to leave Madame Couture's camp in the morning the men from St. Matthias had set out on their return journey.

XVII

The Departure from Sainte Marie

Preparations for departure from the fort were hastened. The missionaries superintended the construction of a vessel to carry some of their stores. A large raft was also built. They had to remove the pictures, vestments, sacred vessels, and images from their church; furniture, weapons, and ammunition, tools, goods for barter with Indians, cattle, swine, and poultry. Moreover, they had a large stock of corn, in part the produce of their own fields, and in part purchased from the Hurons in years of plenty.

Several days before they and the soldiers and traders abandoned the fort, they sent out the party from the palisades, accompanied by a few Frenchmen and a strong guard of Huron men.

On a large raft were placed light furniture, provisions, and clothing. Some members of the party travelled on the raft; but the greater number made the journey in canoes. Kishik mourned because she had to leave her comfortable lodge. Her feeling was shared by the old people; they wanted rest

and peace, but a long life of drudgery had brought many of them to a sluggish acceptance of any condition of life that came to them.

On a June morning the fleet of canoes set off. The young people were in high spirits; they enjoyed change and the suspension of daily, irksome tasks.

In a large canoe with Kishik and her girls went Monsieur and Madame Couture and their three young children. The women, with the exception of Kishik, took turns in paddling. The canoes kept as near together as possible; and from time to time, as they sped on their way, the young people sang in chorus the hymns of their church or some of the Huron songs. To all appearance, the Iroquois had temporarily abandoned their marauding parties on the main shore; so the young Hurons had no fear of attracting unwelcome attention by their song.

Toward the end of the first day's journey, the canoes began to wind in and out amid the numerous rocky islands of the bay. Some of these islands are little more than points of rock above the water; others rear high their bald, white crests; but on many a summit trees that have sprung from the crevices wave luxuriant foliage. Pine and red cedar clamber up the slopes; black cherries, raspberries, and huckleberries are abundant in their season.

The sun had dropped behind a peak, and the tints

in the west warned the voyagers that they must find a resting-place for the night.

They came at last to a comparatively large island where a deep, wooded ravine inclined gently to the water's edge, and a broad, shelving rock made landing easy. A spring of clear water rippled down the high, rocky walls and joined a stream that had worn a way through the ravine, and they went babbling together to the bay.

A bell-like sound warned them that swarms of mosquitoes would meet them on their landing. The Indians had little fear of them, but for Dorothy's sake they promised to drive them away with smudges.

Before long, hastily erected bark tents were scattered about the ravine, smoke was curling up from a brushwood fire, and the cooks were preparing for supper the black bass and muskallonge that had been caught by the way.

After their long day on the water, the voyagers were sleepy and tired, and went early to rest on their beds of balsam or cedar boughs. Dorothy was restless and could not sleep. She lay near the open entrance of her tent, looking up at the stars. The tent was close, the air without was cool and sweet. As quietly as possible, so she should not disturb the other inmates, she put on her dress and moccasins. She intended to walk to the shore; but she saw the French and Indian guards lying

there, and feared to disturb their light slumbers. She looked above, where the limestone rock glistened in the moonlight. It was so peaceful, so pure; it seemed to beckon her troubled spirit to come and share its calm.

She clambered up on hands and knees, for the rock was very steep and slippery from the dew. Here and there, where great tufts of moss grew, she rested for a few moments, and then went on her way. Once she would have fallen had she not clung to a shrub that sprang from a crevice. She came unawares on the brink of a great chasm. Some mighty convulsion of nature had rent the rock asunder. Far beneath, at the foot of the precipice, the dark water flowed. Her foot slipped; she felt herself falling; but she caught a branch of a tree that grew at the very edge of the chasm; and, for a moment, clinging to it, swung above the frightful abyss. The tree was but a slender one. Had she been heavier, it would have broken with her weight. As it was, it bent and swayed. Her heart beat fast, she was dizzy with dread. Her feet were swinging in the air. With desperate courage, she moved, hand below hand, until she reached the trunk of the tree, drew herself close to it, and then climbed up again until she could place her feet on the rock.

She moved from the edge of the chasm, and lay for awhile, sick with horror at the thought of the

fate she had escaped. She had believed that she wished to die; she was thankful now that the life blood yet flowed in her veins. After all, hope had not wholly left her; life might yet hold some sweetness for her, though she had drunk bitter draughts from its cup.

She sat up presently, and the majestic solitude calmed her. The silence was unbroken, save by the rustling of the leaves and the plash of waves on the shore.

Then her ear caught the sound of some one clambering up the rock. She crept under a heavy bush, and peered through the low-hanging branches. It might be an enemy. A head appeared above a jutting rock, and Dorothy beheld the ever-watchful Nialona.

She left her retreat, and cried, "O, Nialona, why come you here?"

"To me belongs that question," replied Nialona, indignantly. "Why have you done this, and brought fear to the heart of every one?"

"I could not sleep. I wanted to be alone. I meant no wrong. In a little time, I would have returned."

"And who could know that? I awoke; I found your place empty. I aroused others to help me to seek you."

"But, Nialona, the poor women, the children; they were so weary; their sleep should not be broken."

"Dorothy, think you I am a madwoman who would rouse every one? When I found you had fled, I sought only the aid of the men on the shore."

Nialona's tone was the dictatorial one she had for some time assumed toward Dorothy. Though she had not been taken into the Superior's confidence, she was aware that he entertained some suspicions regarding the stranger. He had placed her in a position of guard and authority over her guest. She had also been the instructor and guide of her Huron sisters. She believed that the Fathers looked upon her as their confidante and a model to which the other women in the palisades should conform. She naturally magnified her own virtues and importance. Besides, she had her own charge against Dorothy. Before the arrival of the white girl, the young men, Frenchmen as well as Indians, had paid her flattering attentions. She was handsome, and civilization had developed her native beauty. The young Indians perceived her superiority to her untutored kinswomen, and the Frenchmen found more interest in her companionship than in that of the other Huron girls. With the exception of Washaka and Panasawa, who had been under instruction for several years, even the converts of the mission were not far removed from savagery. Since Dorothy had been with them Nialona had been comparatively neglected. Though the Fathers had made stringent rules, and had

finally forbidden the young Frenchmen to enter the palisades, the direction of their eyes in the church, and the eagerness with which they sought opportunity to say a word to Dorothy after the services, or when they accompanied the girls as guards on any excursions, kept jealousy burning in the Indian heart. While she had rejoiced in her queendom, she had treated some of the men disdainfully. But she had shown favor to one man, and when, soon after Dorothy's arrival, she perceived that he was growing indifferent to her, she was filled with bitterness. She believed that Dorothy had used every art to win the young men, for Victor Caradeuc had not been the only one who had shown himself fickle. Had not Léon de Charolais, who was pledged to the Church, been lured from his duty by the false stranger? Had not Raoul Hauteroche forsaken Washaka? Dorothy had pretended to dislike and avoid Hauteroche; but Nialona believed it was only pretence, and that, in her own way, she must have encouraged him. For weeks she had cherished these feelings against the white girl, and made Dorothy aware of her attitude by many an ill-natured speech; and Dorothy had been greatly relieved by the announcement that Caradeuc had not been appointed to assist in guarding the party to Isle St. Joseph.

"Dorothy, you must return at once," said Nialona. "The men are weary, yet they will seek you

by land and water; for who could know if you had paddled away?"

Nialona's manner was most irritating; but Dorothy controlled her anger. She knew she had given trouble, and was sorry for it.

"Yes, Nialona, I will go with you at once," she said, as amiably as she could.

They were about to begin the descent, when René le Breton's dark head appeared above a point of rock.

"Mademoiselle Dorothée," he exclaimed, joyfully, "you are safe! But what alarm you have caused us!"

"O, I grieve, I am sorry," said Dorothy, penitently.

The young man made the ascent quickly, and in a few moments stood beside the girls.

"Fair maiden," he said, looking at Dorothy with an admiration which Nialona resented, "we have been roused from our slumbers, and have received many bruises from these rocks in your service. In return, grant us a favor; inform us why you roam thus at midnight."

"I—I desired to meditate in quiet."

"To meditate! Ah, and your thoughts were of lofty things, therefore you sought this height. Well, the good Fathers, were they here, would have no word of blame for you; for do they not continually urge us to seek the grace that comes from

solitary meditation? Yet, when you wish to sit apart, at the midnight hour, by the light of the moon, it will be well to inform us of your purpose, and so spare us some anxious moments."

"I will bear it in mind, Monsieur le Breton. I have said, I am grieved for my fault. But how knew I that any one would be roused? Yet many times have I caused sorrow to others by reason of my lack of thought."

"Ah, do not accuse yourself. You came here to sit alone with your thoughts, and yet you tell us you have lack of thought."

"Come," said Nialona, severely, "why waste time? Others are still seeking, we know not where." She felt impatient with Dorothy's labored attempts to reply in French to Le Breton's foolish speeches.

"Let us tarry a while," said René. "I must see this deep abyss. On one of the islands of this bay there yawns a chasm that bears the name, 'The Lovers' Leap.' Tradition relates that the lover of a Huron girl had forsaken her, and in her despair she paddled off alone in her canoe, and sought death on the water. But the water spirits refused to grant her desire. Many times she cast herself down, seeking to sink to the bed of the lake; but they bore up her body, and she floated on the surface in their arms; in the wildest storms her canoe rode the waves in safety. One day she landed on an island

—this island, it must be—she came to a mighty chasm, and a voice from the water beneath seemed to call her to death. Her spirit answered the call; she was ready to fling herself from the brink, when she heard a footstep on the rock, and, looking back, saw the form of a man who had loved her for many years; but for him she cared nothing. He had sought her untiringly. He did not see the chasm, and uttered a cry of joy. But her answer was not given to him, but to the cry of the death spirit in the water below. He sprang to her; but she cast herself down, and he followed her to death.”

René restrained a smile at Dorothy’s serious face. She looked down the precipice, and shuddered.

“The story goes, that in the world of spirits she recognized the devotion of her true lover. Yet her phantom canoe is often seen winding in and out of the channels between these islands, and his is always in pursuit. The false lover and the girl who had stolen him away had no peace. Many troubles befell them. They were haunted by visions of the phantom canoe, and of the body of the girl floating out from the water of the chasm to the bay. When the false lover went a-fishing at night, by the light of his torch he saw reflected back from the water the eyes of the dead woman.”

“It was the justice of heaven that he should be tormented,” said Nialona, viciously. “And the girl, so false, so treacherous, it was right that her heart should find no happiness.”

She gave a glance at Dorothy, which she did not wish René to observe. But his eyes were quick, and he perceived at once that there was trouble between the two, though he was unaware of the cause of Nialona's jealousy. As he had his own share of masculine vanity, he believed he had aroused her ill-feeling by his manner toward Dorothy, and told himself that he must be very discreet.

"No eyes of the living beheld the death of the faithful girl and her true lover," he said, addressing himself to Nialona; "and no one can tell how that part of the story became known. It may be the two revealed it when they paddled in their phantom canoes; or it may be she came from the spirit land to whisper it in dreams to the faithless one. It must be that the man who was so true was of our race. Would any Huron so love a girl that he would die for her?"

At that moment Monsieur Couture and an Indian appeared.

"Why have you done this?" he asked, roughly, looking at Dorothy with angry eyes. He had been roused from his much-needed rest; and he had been very anxious, because the Superior had especially placed Dorothy under his care.

"I—could not sleep," faltered the girl. "I am sorry."

"You give too much trouble. I shall be thankful, Father Ragueneau will be thankful, when you

can be sent to Quebec and put in the charge of some strict woman who will know how to manage you."

Dorothy's lip quivered, and, involuntarily, her eyes sought René's protection.

What chivalrous youth would not return a responsive glance if appealed to by eyes so beautiful?

René was an exemplar of chivalry, and, notwithstanding his light tone when talking of affairs of the heart, he was susceptible and romantic.

When he left France to live in the wilderness he believed that his heart had been wounded beyond healing; for a lovely woman had rejected his addresses and given her affections to another.

He had not expected that his work in the mission would cure the wounds; he had hoped, at the most, that work and time would in some degree assuage their aching.

Two years had passed, and though he bore in his heart his unrequited affection, and assumed—when he thought of it—a pensive air that was very becoming, the wounds were undoubtedly in process of healing.

At times, after he had visited Kishik's lodge with the object of cheering Nialona, who was homesick for France, he had considered the possibility—as a sort of revenge for the wrongs civilization had wrought him—of following the example of Monsieur Couture and other Frenchmen and wedding

an Indian girl. It would entail some sacrifices, but he might find a solace in making Nialona happy.

After Dorothy's arrival he put this consideration aside. He could do so without dishonor. He had made no declaration to Nialona, and it had become plain to him that she preferred another.

His sympathetic heart had been touched by the pathos of poor Dorothy's face and the trials of her condition. She was placed under a constant surveillance which must be hard to bear. He surmised that it was in part the outcome of the devotion of Léon de Charolais, which had been observed and commented upon by the young soldiers and traders. But now, when Léon was safely out of the way, why should the Superior's face grow so stern when he spoke of Dorothy? He had heard it suggested that the Fathers suspected there was a mystery, a sorrowful secret, in her past, but that no one knew more about her life than she had confided to Léon, and that was little. A secret sorrow made her the more interesting, and no one who looked into her face of almost child-like innocence and purity could believe that she was concealing any wrong deed of her own. He had been annoyed by Hauteroche's flippant tone when he spoke of her, and had regarded himself as her defender.

Now the quivering lip and tear-dimmed eyes called for his good offices. He gave her a protective and sympathetic glance, and turned to Couture.

“My good friend,” said he, “Mademoiselle Dorothy should be commended, not censured. She climbed to this height with much difficulty, as we can all testify, for solitary meditation. The Fathers themselves could not have chosen a place more fitting. And look, are we not well repaid for following her upward to this scene of wondrous beauty? Behold it: in the distance, the dark forest-clad shores of the mainland and a glimpse of the moonlit waters of the bay; far and near, for miles around us, see the islands, set like jewels, rimmed with the sparkling silver of the crested waves; mark the varied shapes, the many colors. Were it an hour of sunlight, the fruit of yonder tree would be ruby drops against the white stone, touched with a reflection of emerald from the deep water of the ravine below. Your dreams, my friend, should be the sweeter for remembrance of the scene. And now let us descend to the fragrant valley.”

Monsieur Couture smiled. He understood the purpose of the young man's ramblings, and Dorothy rewarded René by a grateful glance.

At that moment his unrequited affection was not a noticeable burden.

XVIII

On the Isle St. Joseph. René Seeks Dorothy's Confidence

The voyagers found their second day's travel wearisome. The wind had dropped, there was hardly a ripple on the water, and the glare of the sun was almost intolerable. The novelty had passed, and the little ones were restless and irritable. But when the sun had gone down, and a cool breeze swept over the bay, when they could look at the dark, varied line of the shore without aching eyes, they would willingly have remained longer on the water. They were near enough to the mainland to hear the clear cry of the whip-poor-will, but there might be a risk of encounter with some lurking Iroquois; so they set up their tents for the night on a small island.

On the evening of the third day they arrived at Isle St. Joseph, near the entrance of Matchedash Bay. There were three islands near together; the largest, the future home of the mission, was six or

eight miles wide, and densely covered with the primeval forest.*

They found about three hundred Huron families already established in the woods. They had erected wigwams and sheds of bark, had made some rough clearings and planted a little corn. But they had all lost heart. They felt they were a doomed people, and they lounged in the forest, woful and despondent. They were half famished, too, for they had not brought sufficient provisions with them, and did not fish and hunt energetically enough to renew their supplies.

The arrival of the party from the palisades roused them. A large number of them had never seen Dorothy, and she was an object of much curiosity and interest to them. They built their fires, and hung their kettles, each on a tripod of poles, to give the new comers a welcome. They were a hospitable people; they gave generously from their small stores, and when the visitors had satisfied their hunger the men helped them to erect their temporary wigwams.

A bark lodge was put up for Kishik and her girls; Washaka had been for some time a member of Kishik's household. The Hurons would have built the lodge in the midst of their hastily erected village,

* These islands are now known as Faith, Hope, and Charity. Charity is also called Christian Island.

but Nialona persuaded them to set it up in a grove at a little distance. The disorder and uncleanness of the village would have been almost as intolerable to her as to Dorothy. But, in spite of the precaution of setting it apart, their lodge was continually overrun by idle squaws and unruly children. The orphan children from the palisades broke bounds and became nearly as unmanageable as their new associates. The girls who had taught in the school tried to gather the young savages in a large grove and give them some instruction. But neither threat nor commendation availed, and they were compelled to resort to rewards or bribes, promising two or three beads, a trinket, or a lump of maple sugar to those who sat quietly on the ground, learned a few words of a hymn or prayer, or stood up in good order to go through a drill. But this was also a failure, for those who had received rewards were pounced on by the others, and a general struggle ensued. So, until the arrival of the missionaries, the young teachers limited their efforts to the instruction of the children of their own party.

But, notwithstanding difficulties, their first days on the island were pleasant ones. The weather was delightful, and they could escape from the Indian village and wander in the woods. No Iroquois had been seen anywhere in the neighborhood; guards were constantly on the lookout for strange canoes,

so the girls were free to ramble far from the tents. They gathered flowers, fished in the streams, found the eggs of wild fowl near the shores, sat in the woods plaiting baskets and other household articles from strips of bark, bathed in a shallow cove, or paddled in their canoes within safe distance from the island. A little later in the season there would be an abundant supply of berries, and there was difficulty in restraining the children from eating the green ones. With the assistance of the Indian boys they fenced plots of ground for their gardens and poultry yards. Some of their poultry had been brought on the large raft, and the missionaries would bring the rest.

In the days before the arrival of the Fathers, Dorothy saw for the first time many of the peculiar rites of the heathen Indians, who, unrestrained by the presence of the priests, gave themselves up to their superstitions.

A warrior had dreamed that he would die if the evil spirits were not propitiated by a feast, and though provisions were scarce his comrades felt bound to comply with his request. A party of hunters had come in with a supply of game, and the fishermen had also been busy. The invited guests were obliged to eat all that was set before them, regardless of their subsequent discomfort. To refuse would not only be a grave offence, but would imperil the life of their brother. The Jesuits gave

to such feasts the name "Festins à manger tout." The guests generally dreaded them, but dared not decline.

The warrior in whose honor the feast was given did not die, but many of the feasters were seriously ill from the effects of the gorge following their enforced abstinence. Incantations, magic songs, and frightful noise, produced by whooping and beating with sticks on dry sheets of bark and on drums, were unavailing to exorcise the demon of disease; so the grand festival of the *Ononhara*, or Dream Feast, was held. At midnight all the pagans in the village and a large number who had called themselves Christians—men, women, and children—assembled in a clearing just outside the village, and there affected to have lost their senses. Some of the actors had little clothing, but were painted in various colors; others were extravagantly decked with beads, furs, and feathers. Presently the crowd separated, and in bands, in couples, or singly, darted from house to house, shrieking and howling, dancing and raving, some throwing fire-brands, others discharging the contents of their water-buckets over any one they met. In a day or two afterward the sick men, who had had time to overcome the effects of their gluttony, began to mend, and their recovery was attributed to these orgies.

The little company of Christians began to look

with anxiety for the arrival of the Fathers, with their Frenchmen, for they feared that some ceremony of the pagans might be attended with dangerous results.

René le Breton and another Frenchman set up their tent not far from Kishik's lodge, and were on the watch for any outbreak.

The capacity of guardian was acceptable to René, and he thought it entitled him to take counsel with his wards.

At the close of a warm June day he called at the lodge, and found Dorothy sitting on a log before the entrance, trying to get a breath of cool air.

"O, Mademoiselle Dorothee," he pleaded, "on the water the breeze is refreshing. It will honor me if you come with me in my canoe."

"I thank you," said Dorothy, with a little sigh; "you are kind. But—have you not heard that the Superior has forbidden me to accompany the young men on the water, to receive visits from them?"

"It is folly!" said René, indignantly. "Are you a child that they should treat you so? Yet—you speak wisely—the orders of Father Ragueneau must be obeyed."

"It grieves me, Monsieur le Breton. My wish is to go with you. Your kindness has comforted me. You have helped me—to—put away, for a little time, the sad thoughts."

René flushed with pleasure; his voice was tremu-

lous and tender when he asked: "Have I indeed comforted you? And, tell me, trust me, what are the sad thoughts I have helped you to forget?"

The deep blue eyes turned on him took a softer light, and Dorothy answered: "You have comforted me in this; others, not all, but many, have distrusted me. I have perceived it, ah, so often; sometimes by the word spoken, sometimes by the look alone. It has not been so with you. At all times you have given to me your respect, your true kindness. My own heart knows how deeply it is grateful."

René's chivalric frame thrilled—a beautiful girl had given him the place of champion and consoler. At that moment his unrequited affection was not discernible. A day or two before this meeting he had argued with himself that to cherish a grief over the inevitable was unmanly and unphilosophical; had resolved that he would not continue to indulge in such weakness, whatever the effort might cost him; and had then proceeded to pat himself gently for his heroic self-conquest.

"Ah," he said, looking down at Dorothy with devotion in his eyes, "they who mistrust you must be blind indeed."

Dorothy sighed deeply. "But I am unable to tell them what they ask, and the good Fathers believe that in my silence I conceal some evil I have done. That is hard to bear, yet I cannot speak.

I have indeed endeavored to please them, to obey every rule; and thus it is, Monsieur René, though I greatly desire to converse with you, I may not disobey the order of the Superior, and I must beg you now to leave me."

The young man's countenance fell. Doubtless the Fathers showed discretion in prohibiting the visits of some men. But it was monstrous that he, René le Breton, should be deprived of liberty to do as he chose in this matter.

His silence disturbed Dorothy. She feared she had offended him.

"O, believe me, I grieve to tell you this," she said, with much concern. "I would that you might come often and converse with me, that I might ask counsel of you, as of a brother. Ah, if I had ever had a brother——"

She broke off and covered her face with her hands.

René did not desire to be accepted in that relationship, but it would serve to begin with; so he said, tenderly, "Trust me as you would trust a brother, Sister Dorothée, dear little Sister Dorothée."

She looked up with a smile, though there were tears in her sweet eyes. "Yes, I trust you as a brother, and I permit you to address me by that name, Brother René."

The watchful Nialona appeared at that moment

and looked at the pair suspiciously. Two days passed before René had another opportunity for conversation with his new sister. Then, to his great satisfaction, he found her wandering in the woods alone.

“Why so serious, my sister Dorothee?” he asked. “Tell your brother of what you were thinking so deeply.”

“I was thinking of—a day in England.”

“And your thoughts have made you sad. Why will you not share them with me, and so lighten your burden?”

“Ah, no, I cannot, I cannot; it is not for my adopted brother to share that.”

He bent his head low, and said softly: “Look into my face and tell me, will you not one day share the secret burden with one whose right it will be to bear it—one nearer, dearer, than a brother?”

She looked startled, and drew herself away. “I—do not understand.”

“Sweet sister Dorothee, some day you will trust, you will tell all to—your husband?”

He had had no intention of going so far. When he had tried to analyze his feelings in the matter he had discovered that his broken heart was mending, had, indeed, so far recovered that it was capable of receiving another love; but it could never love as it had loved once, that was out of the question. Moreover, under present circumstances, he could

not ask Dorothy to marry him. Chivalrous as he was, he had remembered that family considerations should deter him from committing himself rashly to any pledge to one who had a mystery in her past. His own words somewhat startled him.

But Dorothy's answer was far more disturbing. "My—husband," she faltered. "O—there is not need—to tell *him—he—knows.*"

For some moments René felt stunned and unable to reply.

"Great Heaven!" he cried, presently. "Surely—surely you—you—child that you are—cannot be a married woman. Tell me—Dorothée, tell me—it is not true."

At that moment René would have cheerfully thrown every family objection, every worldly consideration, with the remains of his first love, to the bottom of Lake Huron, or any other burial place, for an assurance that no other man had a right to call Dorothy his own.

"A married woman," she answered; "no, no, not that; and now, never, never, shall I be."

René's mind was relieved. But, with his relief, his family considerations returned, bearing some caution with them.

"Sister Dorothée, you are very young. Why do you speak so? Your mind will change. Who can doubt that you will marry?"

"Ah, no, never, never."

“But why? Look at me, tell me truly, what reason have you to speak thus? Some day your heart will learn to love, and then——”

She dropped her eyes and bent her head. She was troubled and half afraid. This young man's words and tone were not those of a brother. He must make no mistake.

“O, brother René, it is true I am young; yet I know whereof I speak. Marriage is not for me—love is but for once—and for all time.”

Once more the family considerations, the well-weighed obstacles, were mentally consigned by the young man to any place deep enough to hold them; the agonies of unrequited affection were upon him in new form. But some hope lighted the gloom. It seemed plain from what she had said that marriage with one she loved was impossible; there could be no dishonor in an effort to take the place of a suitor whose case was hopeless. A girl so lovely should not be permitted to pine and waste her young life thus. He could argue from experience. To love but once, to love for all eternity was a beautiful and ennobling ideal; one sang the songs of such love, one read of it in books; but in life, who could find it? In his youthful inexperience he had believed in it. But now, how was it? Had he not loved most deeply, most truly, and lived to learn that one could love deeply, truly, again? Yet he flattered himself that he was a man

of more than ordinary constancy; so he bade himself be of good cheer.

He walked beside Dorothy for some time in silence. He would not distress her by any denial of the virtue of constancy. But he gave several judicious sighs and looked pensive.

"Brother René," she said presently, "I may trust you. I beseech you, repeat to no one a word that I have spoken."

"You may indeed trust me, little sister Dorothy; not one word shall ever be told to mortal ears."

He wished to hear more, but she would not continue the subject. She turned toward the village, and would talk of nothing but the difficulties in managing the young Indians and of domestic affairs.

When René was alone he recalled the jesting of the young men on the devotion of De Charolais. The missionaries had said nothing on the subject, but it was commonly believed that Léon had been sent away on that account. Was it possible that Dorothy referred to a hopeless love for him? In that case he would do her a service if he could win her heart. True, De Charolais was not a priest, he had not yet taken any irrevocable vows to the Church; yet René had gathered that he felt himself bound by some promise that he deemed irrevocable to remain steadfastly in the course he had

begun, and for which he had evidently no inclination. Léon was firm and persistent. If he had given a promise he would not break it, therefore Dorothy's marriage with him was out of the question. René heartily pitied him, for he believed that he loved the girl and had been parted from her by the Superior. Le Breton had heard that he would not even be permitted to visit the new settlement on the island. Under the circumstances, as any bond between De Charolais and Dorothy, if such existed, would far better for the sake of both be broken, René felt that his duty and his inclinations were at liberty to embrace each other.

But for the time he had no opportunity to prosecute his suit further. That evening the Jesuit Fathers, with a number of soldiers, traders, and laborers, landed on the island. They had stripped Sainte Marie of everything that could be moved. Then, lest it should harbor the Iroquois, they had set it on fire, and in an hour the results of years of toil were consumed. Near sunset, on the fourteenth of June, they had descended to the mouth of the Wye and boarded their raft. Though their destination was not far, their cumbrous craft had moved so slowly over the water that they had been several days on the journey.

The Fathers at once sought to bring order out of the general confusion. Their arrival inspirited the despondent Hurons. Though they had been

weakened by lack of good food, they set to work to hew and burn down a portion of the forest, to build substantial bark houses, and plant palisades. The priests chose a favorable spot, and began to clear the ground and mark lines for a fort. To this place also they gave the name Sainte Marie.

But the energies of René le Breton were turned in other directions. When the Superior heard Nialona's account of the young man's attentions to Dorothy he grew uneasy. Under some circumstances he would have rejoiced in Dorothy's marriage with a worthy man, and, as far as she was concerned, it would relieve the priests of much responsibility. But her determined silence had created much suspicion; should René go to France from the mission with a bride whose history might bring reproach on the Le Breton name the family would be justly indignant. They would be far less averse to his marriage with an Indian girl. The Indians were lords of the forest. Moreover, an Indian wife would have no undesirable relatives in the neighborhood of France; England was not at such convenient distance. His marriage with an English girl would not be acceptable to his family; she was a heretic, and René's people were upholders of the Faith. If she loved him she might be led to renounce her heresies, but the other objection would remain. René was of age. He could marry if he chose. But the Superior felt himself in duty

bound to prevent any undesirable alliance. He directed Le Breton to accompany Hauteroche and a party of Hurons, with proposals, to the Neutral Nation. The expedition involved danger, and René could not decline an honorable mission. He had a picturesque and melancholy parting with Dorothy, and the Superior's mind was set at rest, in that direction at least, for some months.

Meanwhile the Frenchmen worked energetically. Before winter, a square bastioned fort of solid masonry, with walls twelve feet high, rose in the forest; it was surrounded by a deep ditch. Near at hand there were detached redoubts, where French musketeers could aid in defending the Huron village. Within the fort were built a small chapel and houses for lodging.*

The vigilance of the soldiers preserved the island from any Iroquois attack through the summer; but

* A well, and the ruins of this fort may still be seen on the southeastern shore of the island, a hundred feet from the water. In 1848, a steel mill for making wafers for the Host was found in the fort, and was removed to an English museum. Some time ago, delegates from the Canadian Institute made an inspection of Christian Island. The ruined walls were distinctly traced. Water-washed stones and crumbling mortar rose two or three feet above the level, and were partly overgrown with vegetation. The relics of the wooden bastions at the corners of the palisades were also traceable. These remains, and those of the old fort on the Wye, are in conformity with the descriptions in the narratives and letters of the priests.

Iroquois scalping parties began to range the neighboring shores, killed some stragglers, and kept the islanders in alarm.

XIX

The Insolence of Hauteroche

The frosts of late September had touched the trees and tinted the island with many colors. At a distance the deep green of the cedars appeared almost black in contrast with the brilliance of the hardwoods, the golden flame and crimson of the maples—most beautiful of autumn trees—the red brown of the oaks and the yellow of the beeches. The underbrush and creeping vines, the fallen and mouldering trees, decked with mosses, lichens, and young ferns, were as exquisite in their varied hues as the canopies above.

On one of these autumn days Dorothy had wandered to an isolated valley, where she stood looking into a deep pool whose surface, undisturbed by a ripple, reflected the woodland beauty.

The stillness was broken by the crackling of branches. She looked in the direction of the sound and saw Raoul Hauteroche making his way toward her. She had not heard of his return from the expedition to the Neutral Nation. She would have been better pleased if he had remained with that people. But there was one satisfaction: no doubt

René le Breton had returned also, and she would be glad to see her adopted brother.

Hauteroche's party had arrived at the fort early in the morning, and when he had delivered his messages, and could steal away without attracting attention, he started for Kishik's lodge. He had determined to be the first to meet Dorothy, for the Superior had detained Le Breton.

Poor Washaka had been made happy for a time by the affected cordiality of his greeting, but she soon perceived his indifference to any information that did not relate to Dorothy. Presently, when he discovered that she was not in the lodge, he rose to go, saying that he must return to the fort.

"It may be," he said, lightly, "that the Superior will send me in command of a party that will bear messages to the English settlements. Should that be so I would carry tidings to the friends of Mademoiselle Dorothée. Where may I find her, to speak with her concerning this?"

"How know I?" asked Washaka, coldly. "She wanders away, alone."

Hauteroche affected indifference. "It matters little. Father Ragueneau will instruct me where I may find her people and of the message I shall bear. I will now return to the fort. The men have wrought diligently since we left. The walls have risen already to a fair height."

He observed the disappointment in Washaka's

face, and made some flattering remarks that restored her good-humor.

But she distrusted him. When he went away she watched him through a crevice in the lodge wall, and presently saw him leave the path for the fort and walk in the direction of the valley. Dorothy had discovered it soon after her arrival on the island, and he knew it was her favorite haunt.

Jealous misery came upon Washaka; as soon as he had gone so far that she could follow him without discovery she went after him with stealthy steps.

Before she reached the entrance to the valley she turned aside from the path and went to the top of the steep hill. From that height, and hidden by the heavy foliage, she looked down.

Ah, she had divined truly! Dorothy stood by the pool; and presently she saw Raoul hastening toward her with eager face.

At that moment there was murder in Washaka's heart. A warrior of her tribe would not have longed more vengefully to stand by the dead body of his enemy than she, in her jealous fury, longed to see the English girl's false face white in death, to see the light of life darkened in those hateful blue eyes. Ah, the treacherous Dorothy! Had she not pretended to scorn the Indian girl who had stolen the lover of her friend?—Dorothy had told Washaka René's story of the Lovers' Leap. Yet

her own deceitful heart had plotted against those who had befriended her. So poor Washaka, with her slighted love moaning and the desire of vengeance clamoring within her, peered from her height with miserable eyes.

When Dorothy saw Hauteroche her face flushed, and he took it as a sign that, notwithstanding her former disdainful attitude, she was pleased to see him. He believed that she, like all women as he understood them, was fickle and unstable. He had resented her treatment of him, it rankled in his mind; but he was not the less anxious to gain her favor.

Dorothy met him with as much civility as she found possible, but her manner was reserved and cold, and he resorted to a plan to rouse her from her indifference.

"I visited St. Matthias not long since," he said, and looked at her keenly.

Her manner changed; she asked, with much interest, "Did you spend much time there?"

"I saw Léon de Charolais many times," he answered, and watched the effect of his words.

Washaka rose and moved along stealthily, for Hauteroche and Dorothy had left the pool and were wandering to the heart of the deeply wooded valley. She saw Dorothy's face upturned and Raoul bending his head toward her. But, with keenest listening, she could not hear a word.

"De Charolais has changed. He is thin, he looks older."

"Ah, is it that he labors with too much diligence?"

"It may be, though it was well known he had no love for hard work when he lived at Sainte Marie."

"Is it that the mission is not healthful? Do fevers and agues lie in the marshes? Were the Superior informed, it may be he would remove him."

"The ground is high, no marsh is near to send forth agues and fevers, yet the Superior has removed him."

"Tell me, where is he now?"

"He is on his way to join some Hurons on the North Shore. They are now encamped on an island in the bay."

"And—when he is so near—he will—surely, he will—come here?"

Hauteroche laughed. "Do you indeed believe the Superior will permit that? Father Ragueneau may not be so wise in the wisdom of the world as others whom we know, but he is not blind."

"Monsieur Hauteroche, I do not understand. Your words are as riddles."

"And why should I not speak in riddles to one who is herself a riddle that the wisest of the Fathers has been unable to read? Must I speak more

plainly, with words that you cannot fail to understand?"

"No, no," she cried, shrinking from him. "The hour is late. I must haste to Nialona. The Superior would be displeased if——"

"Ha, ha," he laughed, rudely. "Little care you, fair maid, for the Superior's commands."

She turned from him and tried to escape, but he caught her hands and held them fast.

Washaka, on the height above, flung herself, face forward, on the ground.

"Monsieur Hauteroche, release me, set me free," she cried, and tried desperately to wrench her hands from him.

"Not yet," he said, "not till you tell me, Dorothy, why you treat me with so little kindness."

"Are you a coward," she cried, "that you hold a defenceless girl against her will?"

An evil look shot from Raoul's eyes. "Such words come well from you to me," he said, and his grip on her hand was cruel. "My family is one of the oldest in France; all may read its records and learn that not one of our house has ever borne that brand. But of you, who knows anything? You dare not reveal your name. Your life holds a secret so dark that you will not bring it to the light. Scorn should speak from other lips than yours."

Dorothy, still struggling to free herself, began to sob.

“Ah, do not weep,” he said, turning from rage to a softness that was repellent to her. “You angered me, I spoke in haste. Listen to me, Dorothy. Why do you repulse me when I would be kind to you? Why do you waste your life, your loveliness, in fruitless mourning for one whom you will never see again? But I——”

“Never see him again! How is it possible that you can know? Is the ear of God turned from me that He should not hear my prayers? If it please Him, He will, He can, bring us together. If it be His will to keep us asunder till our lives end, then I live alone, I suffer alone, as true to him as I know he is true to me.”

“Ah, fair maid, you have made your confession, and what will Father Ragueneau say when he hears of it? You would better pray Heaven to avert his displeasure. It would be of a piece with your prayers for a benediction on a sinful love.”

“A sinful love! You know not what you say. It is sacred. It is hallowed.”

“Ha, ha! A sacred love! Pardon my merriment, your words provoke it. Is it the priestly vocation that sanctifies it?”

“Monsieur Hauteroche, I say again, I do not understand you.”

“You do not understand! Yet your mind has never been slow to comprehend. When I tell Father Ragueneau what you have admitted he will understand.”

"Tell him what you will, but set me free. I demand it!"

"Yes, I will set you free," he said, changing his tone, and drawing her to him. "You shall be free if you grant me one little favor. Give me but one kiss, and it will seal my lips. I will not tell Father Ragueneau."

He bent his head lower, as if to take what he asked, and in doing so loosened the grasp of his hand. Suddenly, in the strength of her scorn and terror, Dorothy wrenched herself from him and, fast as her feet would carry her, sped through the valley and up the hillside. The hill was steep and thickly wooded, and she crept through places where Raoul's larger frame could not easily follow. From the summit she looked down and saw him standing in a cleared spot of the valley.

"Monsieur Raoul Hauteroche," she cried, "tell the Superior what you will. I have said no word of which I am ashamed. And tell him my last word to you. It is this: Raoul Hauteroche, unmanly man, I despise you; I despise you; I despise you!"

XX

Wasbaka Makes the Charge of Treachery

Hauteroche had some fear that Dorothy might seek an interview with the Superior, and believed that his own safety lay in preparing Father Rague-neau to discredit her story; so he lost no time in hastening to the fort with his information. Dorothy's words and action had stung his vanity, and, smarting from the sting, he strode across the valley as if he were escaping from something that he feared.

When Dorothy had made sure that he would not attempt to follow her she threw herself on the ground and sobbed aloud in her hurt at the indignity that had been offered her. She rubbed her delicate hand on the ground, as if to cleanse it from what she felt to be the contamination of his touch. It was time to go back to the lodge to help Nialona with the supper, but she forgot that, forgot everything but her misery.

After awhile she rose, walked to a stream that ran down the hillside, and washed her swollen eyes.

Some time before Dorothy's escape from her tormentor Washaka had heard Nialona calling and had answered the summons.

When Dorothy arrived at the lodge Nialona was roasting ears of corn in the coals, and Washaka was moving about in a bewildered way, as if to help her, but really accomplishing little.

"Nialona, I am sorry, again I have arrived late when I should have been here to help you," said Dorothy, penitently.

"I ask not help from you," said Nialona, coldly. Then she added, "Go, go away with Washaka. Always I must work, work, for how do you aid me? You wander far, you forget there is work to do. And Washaka, she is as a child, without understanding. See, she has burned the cakes so they are black. Who would eat them?"

Dorothy perceived that Washaka was unhappy, but she did not connect her distressed appearance with Hauteroche.

"Washaka, come with me," she said.

Washaka could hardly endure Dorothy's presence, but she had something to say; so she turned and walked on sullenly, refusing to speak till they were far from the lodge.

"Washaka, what is it?" asked Dorothy, pausing in her walk. "Why do you show me such anger?"

"I answer not. You know."

"I do not know. I have not harmed you. For what reason do you treat me thus?"

“It is for me to ask, Why do you treat me thus? You came to our lodge, you were sick, you were without a friend. With Nialona I nursed you by day and by night. I remembered not when I was weary. I gave you of my clothes, my food. I was to you as a sister. And you, what have you done? You have been as a thief. You have taken for yourself that which was mine.”

Dorothy turned pale, then flushed angrily. She had no idea to what Washaka referred. “A thief! Venture never again to repeat that word. Never have I taken what was yours. You have said you were my sister. Would a sister follow my steps as a spy? Would a sister seek to draw from me the thoughts I would hide in my own heart and carry my words to others? When I awoke on my sick bed, when I learned how you had nursed me, how the roof of Kishik had sheltered me, I desired to help you, to love you. I have helped. I have worked for you, for Kishik, for Nialona. But to love you! How could I love one who listened, who watched, who repeated, distrusting always? I have tried to bear it, to show no anger; but many times have I longed to hide myself from your eyes, from the eyes of Nialona, in the water, deep down, or in the grave. Yet have I never betrayed you, never have I said to any one a word that would do you harm.”

Dorothy paused, and Washaka burst out: “You

say you have stolen nothing. You say you have never betrayed me. Your word is false. I saw you, I saw your eyes, the eyes of the traitor, looking into his not an hour past. I lay upon the hill when you stood in the valley."

"You saw Monsieur Hauteroche. It is well. You have seen with your own eyes that he is false. And did you not see how I sought to escape him? Did you not know that I hated the touch of his hand, the words of his lips? Washaka, I have done you no wrong."

She laid her hand on Washaka's arm, but the Indian girl flung it off. "Touch me not. Take yourself far from me. I would my eyes might never look on you again."

XXI

An Escape and a Meeting

Dorothy stood where Washaka had left her. She knew neither where to go nor what to do. Washaka wished she might never see her again. Hauteroche had gone to make accusations against her, and the Superior would believe him. She shrank from meeting Hauteroche again, yet she might be unable to avoid it. What could she do to guard herself? What place of rest was there for her?

Her eyes turned to a little cove where her canoe was stowed. A thought flashed through her mind, and without deliberation she put it into action. She ran to the cove, drew out her canoe, and paddled swiftly away. There were few Indians on that side of the island, and, unless she should meet some fishermen in their canoes, she might be out of sight before any one missed her. Washaka would not call attention to her absence. Nialona would surmise that Washaka had quarrelled with her, and would say nothing. There was little punctuality or order at this time in the Indian village, and that was in favor of her escape. Her one thought was

to speed away on the water, somewhere, anywhere, from her misery. She felt shelterless and friendless, and all else was vague. She was not seeking death, though she did not want life. She knew not what she sought.

But out of the chaos a thought took shape. Hauteroche had said that De Charolais was on one of the islands. She knew neither the distance nor the direction, but there was a possibility of reaching him.

The water was rough; the wind drove her canoe on without effort on her part. In the distance and the fading light the island was a faint line against the water, and it would soon be undiscernible. Before long she knew that she could not go back. It would be impossible to paddle her light canoe against that heavy sea. Her dress was wet, for the waves had many times dashed above the edge of the frail vessel. It might be swamped or overturned. She was in danger, but she felt no fear.

Darkness had come on, and the island had been invisible for some time, when she saw something gaining on her. At first it had been a mere dark speck on the waves, but it grew in size as it approached her. Perhaps it was an Iroquois. Though she had been apathetic, that thought startled her. Presently, through the darkness, she made out the form of a canoe, but she did not know whether its occupant was a white man or an Indian. Terror

seized her. Some one was in pursuit, and she was powerless.

A man shouted in Huron, "Who goes there?" She thought it was not the voice of an Indian, but, in the roar of the waves, she was uncertain and made no answer.

The boatman came nearer. He repeated his question in French, and she knew the voice of Léon de Charolais.

"It is I," she cried. "It is I, Dorothy!"

She was in danger; perhaps both were in danger. There was no time for explanations.

"I will pass you," he cried, "and throw a rope to you. If you catch it I will try to guide you beyond the rocks. We are almost upon them."

Had the water been less rough he would have paddled close to her and caught her canoe, but the risk of running into it obliged him to try to keep to one side and at a little distance. As he passed he threw a rope of thongs to the girl, but it fell within a few inches of her boat; in her effort to reach out and grasp it she nearly upset her tottling vessel.

"Do not try to catch it," he cried presently. "Watch for the rocks. We are among them, and some do not rise above the water. Do not fear. I will bring my canoe near you, and by some means you shall be safely landed on that island. See, we are near it, and the water is less deep here."

The island was near; but, so far as Dorothy could see, there was an almost precipitous descent of rock into the water.

"There is low land on the other side," said De Charolais. "If it is possible, keep your canoe at a distance and round the point."

But the waves drove the canoes toward the reef, and there were rocks on every side.

Dorothy's vessel more than once grazed on a rock, but at last they passed the reef and were within sight of the beach.

Suddenly Dorothy cried out, "My canoe is fast on the rock! I cannot move it!"

"Do not move. Sit still. I will come to your aid."

"The canoe is broken. The water pours in."

"Cling to the rock."

"I will try."

"Hold fast. I will land my canoe on the beach and swim to you. Do not lose courage. There is little danger now."

To Dorothy, clinging to the point of rock, while her canoe seemed to be sinking away from her, minutes lengthened to hours, though only a short time passed before De Charolais reached her.

The rock was only a few yards from the shore; and when the young man had landed his canoe safely and thrown off his coat, he discovered that the water was shallow enough to permit him to

wade out and carry the girl ashore. As her strength was almost spent it was the safer way, and it saved her feet, clad only in light moccasins, from the sharp stones.

His attention was so fixed on walking steadily over the treacherous, rocky bottom with his precious burden that he did not utter a word from the time when he rescued her from her perilous place until he set her in safety on the beach. When he had recovered his breath, his first words were, "Your clothing drips with water. I will haste to build a fire. Ah, here is a blanket rug in my canoe. I brought it lest I should have to spend the night on one of these islands. From it we can make a garment for you. See, I will cut slits in it with my knife for your arms, then you will fasten it so it may serve you until your outer dress is dry. Wring the water from it while I gather wood for a fire."

In truth, he was embarrassed and dreaded the explanation of her unlooked-for appearance. She, too, was glad to defer it, and when she had enveloped herself in the large rug, and wrung the water from her dripping garments, she wondered how she should begin her story. She had fastened her new costume at the waist with a piece of rope of skin that Léon had laid beside it, and pinned it here and there with bone pins that the Huron boys had manufactured, when the young man returned.

"I have built a fire," he said; "it will presently

burn brightly. I will hang your gown upon a tree, and ere long it will be dry. Are you chilled?"

"No, I thank you; I feel no discomfort. But you, you are cold."

"No, my coat is almost dry, and I have been many times obliged to pass hours with damp clothing. I shall suffer no harm."

Dorothy walked beside him in silence, and he said, presently, "I was on my way to your island to see Father Ragueneau. It was necessary. But the high wind came up, and I was obliged to turn back. I had been provident; I have a baked fish and ears of corn with me. In a little time there will be coals sufficient to roast the corn. Are you hungry? Have you eaten supper?"

"No, I have taken no food since noonday."

"Have you, then, been so long on the water?"

"I left the island in the afternoon, when the sun was sinking."

"Why did you do so? Did you not know the danger in that light canoe on such a sea?"

They had come up to the fire. The pine logs and branches were blazing high, and he saw her distressed expression.

"I—was in misery—it could not be borne. To stay there—ah—it was not possible. To return—it cannot be—nevermore can I live there again."

Her eyes were cast down. She could not see the perplexity in his white face, but his silence reproached her.

"Wait—wait but a little while. I am very weary. I am full of sorrow. I—will tell you my reason. You will understand."

He turned from her, and hung her dress on a neighboring tree.

"You are weary indeed," he said, gently, "and well nigh exhausted by lack of food. I will roast the ears of corn, and you will sit by the fire and dry your moccasins."

While he roasted the corn, and she drew near the fire to dry the clothing that she had not removed, she prepared pieces of bark to serve as plates, and he told her of his adventures when he had been lost in the woods. He talked rapidly and with animation; but each surmised the anxiety of the other, and many thoughts were in their minds while the narrative went on.

While they ate, laughing because they had to pick up the fish with their fingers, Dorothy told of the journey from Sainte Marie to Isle St. Joseph. Neither referred to the horrors that had preceded that leave-taking.

When they had eaten their meal, De Charolais rose and looked out on the water. "The waves are less high," he said, with his face turned from her. "The wind is falling. In an hour we may venture out again."

Her voice was low when she answered, "O, I cannot, I cannot return. You will go with Hurons

to the North Shore. With one of their women I may find refuge."

He shook his head. "No, no, that is not possible. Trust me, tell me why you dread to return. Fear nothing. Tell me all."

She hid her face in her hands and made no answer.

"Whether you tell me or not," he said, firmly, "I must take you to the island. It is the only way. Nowhere else could I find a safe place for you."

Dorothy felt the change in him. In manner, as well as in appearance, he was older than when she parted from him in the spring.

"It is not that I do not trust you," she answered, leaning her face on her hands and looking into his eyes with a confidence in him that made it difficult for him to maintain his assumed composure. "When I left the island I knew that hereafter it could not be a home for me. I knew not whither I might drift, but when I was on the water I remembered that you were near. I hoped, I prayed, that with you I might find refuge."

He strove almost desperately for the outward calm, but his face flushed at her words. "Why did you seek me?" was the question of his mind, but he did not utter it aloud. He said only, "How did you know I was near?"

"Monsieur—Raoul Hauteroche told me."

She almost hissed out his name.

“You do not like Monsieur Hauteroche?”

“I despise him. I have informed him of that. He is not a man of honor. I—it is hard for me to say it—yet I must tell you. Then you will understand why I will not return.”

“Did he dare to treat you rudely?”

She dropped her eyes, and a blush covered the fair face. “Yes, he was rude indeed. I was alone in the valley when he came to my side. Many months had passed since I had seen him, yet I could not receive him with friendship. He put to me many questions, to which I answered little. Yet by threats that he would inform the Superior of what I had said he sought to terrify me so I should promise what he wished.”

“The villain!” De Charolais drew himself up. His face was white. His eyes dilated. “Tell me—Dorothy—you—promised him nothing.”

“No, rather would I have died. But he seized me roughly. I struggled to be free; but many moments—to me they were as hours—passed before I shook off his hateful grasp and ran as if for my life. I tried to put away the remembrance of the touch of his hand. I rubbed mine upon the grass. In the canoe I dipped it in the water. But yet I feel it.” She gave a little shudder, then went on: “On the first day when I saw that man, before he had spoken a word with me, I shrank from him. Think you that some one, some guardian spirit,

one it may be who was with us on earth and loved us, watches ever near and tells us—in what way we cannot understand—whom we may trust and whom to fear?”

“The thought is beautiful; it is comforting,” said De Charolais. “Tell me, did some spirit guide bid you trust me?”

She looked into his face, her lips quivered, and her eyes filled with tears. “No, no. I came to you, I trusted you—because—” She turned away her head, and broke off her sentence with a sob.

When she spoke again, she did not raise her eyes. “I have not told you all. I watched from the hill, and saw Monsieur Hauteroche walk in the direction of the fort. I had said nothing of which I was ashamed. But how could I know what tale he might fabricate, to which the Superior would listen, believing all? I returned to our lodge, and there I found Washaka. She had seen us in the valley, and she did not know that his presence was hateful to me. She called me by names that were hard to bear. She said I was a thief, a traitor. I tell you this, for you know, every one in the palisades knew, that Monsieur Hauteroche once courted her; and then—he forsook her. Why should she pine for him, weak and false as he is? He did not love her. Love does not change thus.”

She looked at him intently. Her expression was an interrogation?

He spoke words that he regretted when they had passed his lips. His voice was low. "What has taught you that love does not change?"

She clasped her hands, and looked into his eyes. "If love is true, it is for all time. It comes, I know not how; but when it has come it remains. And love has power, and many things that seem as barriers, strong, unyielding, will in time be broken down, or love will overpass them."

In her earnestness, she had risen, and drawn nearer to him. Her eyes glowed, her lips were parted; her face was touched with a beauty that De Charolais had not seen in it before.

He had risen with her. The color flushed his worn face, and his love filled his eyes as he looked down at her.

Why could he not take her in his arms and tell her that love meant that, meant more, perhaps, to him?

Why had they been so thrown together? He had given his word to the dead, and had held his promise sacred. But, despite his faithfulness, despite his work and striving, their courses had been shaped so they should meet. He had thought he had conquered; but now——

He stood before her almost motionless, though feeling surged within him, and for moments the silence was unbroken. Then, something in his face startled her from her spell. She grew pale, drew back, and dropped her hands.

He, too, stepped back, and stood with downcast eyes. "I will cross the point, and see if the storm has abated," he said, striving to speak calmly. "Lie by the fire; try to get a little rest. I will keep watch by the shore."

"I thank you," she said, and her voice was very low. "I will try to rest."

XXII

Tempted in the Wilderness

The storm clouds had passed. The white rock glistened under a clear sky. The starlight was tossed in points of brilliance from the waves. There had been a heavy dew and the rock was slippery; but presently De Charolais found a flat place, from which he could watch the beach where they had landed; but out of sight of Dorothy and so far away that he would not disturb her by his footsteps.

He paced back and forth, unable at first to think clearly.

After awhile, out of the tumult of his thoughts, came the warning that the force of the wind was abating, that he must watch it, that, as soon as he could prudently venture on the water, he must take her back to St. Joseph, however unwilling she might be. He believed that she wanted to stay with him, never to leave him again. But he was convinced that she was a pure and innocent girl, ignorant of evil, without comprehension of the false position in which her action had placed her. She dreaded to return to the reproach and suspicion awaiting her; and his strength yearned over her weakness; he

pitied and longed to shield her. Yet if he could take her back soon, and prove that she had consented to return, if he could help her to explain the cause of her rash venture, she would be protected from Hauteroche, and would perhaps be pardoned for her recklessness. He must take her to St. Joseph before morning, if possible; not only to relieve the anxiety of her guardians, but for her own sake. The Superior might refuse to believe his statement, might fasten unjust suspicion on both; but he must not shrink; he must help her not to shrink through fear of that. His part was to counsel and persuade her to take the one right course.

Then his heart's longing cried: "She loves me. She will love no other. By a mysterious power beyond ourselves we have been brought together, and, though we be thrust apart again, the tie cannot be broken. With me, she might be happy; she would be loved and cherished. Separated, kept far from me, she will be miserable, suspected, misunderstood."

But what would his pleas avail? The Superior would refuse to marry them, though he had taken no vows to the Church. He knew how it would be. He would take her to the fort, and in the morning's dawn he would be banished, and, in all probability, could never look on her face again.

Other thoughts came. Doubtless, there were already fears that she had perished. The searchers

must have discovered that she had set out in her canoe; they must know that on the wild water, in her frail craft, she could have little chance of escaping death by drowning. It was believed that he was many miles farther down the bay with his Hurons. It had been arranged that Hauteroche should return to him with a message from Father Ragueneau; but an emergency had made it necessary that he should see the Superior himself, despite orders to the contrary. Therefore, a meeting between him and Dorothy would not be suspected. Why should he force her back to her misery? In that wilderness he might keep her near him, loved, protected, cherished, and undiscovered. Why should he thrust away the joy held out to them by the invisible hand?

He had by nature a dash and fire, a love of adventure, that had led him to reckless daring in his boyhood; and he had with much difficulty restrained this spirit since his connection with the Society of Jesus. The very peril and adventure of such a life would add to its zest. He sat on the rock, possessed, for a little time, by this new thought. For many months his life had been but a daily record of monotonous, uncongenial tasks, and stern repression of himself. He had given himself little leisure for thought, for thought drove him to despondency or mental rebellion. Doubtless his companions in the mission had their dark

hours. Noël Chabanel, scholarly and refined, detested the Indian life; but when the thought came to him that he should procure a release from the work that he abhorred, and return to congenial employment in France, he believed the suggestion to be a temptation of the devil, and bound himself by a vow to remain in the Huron country until his death. But Chabanel's spiritual fervor lighted the darkness for him. De Charolais had no such light. And when he lost his hold of the will by which he had held his nature in check, long-repressed nature for a time had the mastery; all his high resolves appeared lost in a delirious ecstasy. In imagination, he again bore the girl from the rock, and thrilled to the touch of the clinging arms about his neck. He saw the beautiful eyes looking into his, heard the music of the voice that told him how she trusted him. The light of life, of love, had come to him. Henceforth it would illumine the darkness of the wilderness. Ah, he would willingly and joyfully bear his wearisome toil day by day, knowing that at its close he should feel the touch of the soft hand, delight his eyes with her beauty, his ears with her words! He would go to her presently, take her in his arms, and tell her that, won by her love and trust, he had resolved to love and protect her evermore; that he would never again permit her to be misunderstood or harshly dealt with; that he would take her to a

haven of safety, and hide her from her pursuers. The wind was going down, and they must seek the mainland. He knew a place where she could remain undiscovered and safe until Hauteroche had brought him the message from the Superior. He would have to leave her alone for a few hours, while he waited with his Hurons on their island for the orders; but she was brave; she would trust him, knowing that he would return to her. Then he would disguise her in the costume of a French boy—these Hurons with him had never seen her—and she would accompany his party on the northward way. If it were done, it must be done quickly. He must rise and go to her. “Mademoiselle Dorothy,” he would say, “the night goes swiftly. I have returned for you. We must set out at once.” And she would start and tremble, believing that he intended to compel her to return to St. Joseph, where she would be met by reproach, and placed under continual guard. She would shrink from him, but he would put his arms about her, and say, tenderly, “Fear nothing, my life, my love; I know at last that the precious gift you have offered me is mine to cherish, not to put away. My heart is true to you as yours to me; for I never loved woman before, and you I loved from the first moment when I saw you. What you have said is true—love comes, we know not how; but when it comes, it is for all time.” And she would rest her trusting

head on his breast, and look on him with her gentle, guileless eyes. He saw before him the beautiful face, more exquisitely beautiful because it was so innocent and pure. Ah, innocent and pure! He could not have loved an evil-minded woman. Yet what crime against her trusting innocence did he propose?

The sin in its blackness was revealed to him, and he tried to turn his eyes from the revelation. He argued with himself that men bound by vows, most sacred vows, men of position and power, had lived, were living, holding a white shield before the world, while the under side was darkened by the reflection of secret sin. And he knew that the shield was deeper tinged when it reflected the guilt of one who had vowed himself to be a teacher of others. For the thoughts of the heart are the realities, and, whether men will or no, their inward truth or untruth sends forth its pure or poisonous atmosphere. A man professing a high calling and living in concealed iniquity is an emissary of the evil one for the destruction of souls. Were he to do this deed, he would destroy not only the pure soul of the girl, but even the savages about him would feel his influence for ill. Heretofore, he had tried to be honest and faithful in the life that had been imposed on him. He had sought to elevate the standard of morals among his Indians, and had had some success. Could he ever dare to try again?

His thoughts went back to his parting with Jean de Brébeuf. He saw again the martyred priest; the man who had suffered and kept himself pure. They stood together on the road to St. Louis; he heard again the earnest voice pleading with him to cut off the right hand, pluck out the right eye, to resist temptation manfully. He had given his promise to one who knew, with prophetic instinct, that it would soon be a promise to be held doubly sacred because given to the dead. He had honestly tried to keep it, to thrust his temptation from him. But never before had it come to him as it had come now. How could he, how could he, put from him, now and forever, the love, the joy, that filled him and encompassed him, bewildering his brain with delicious madness?

"I trust you, my son." The words seemed to be spoken aloud beside him—the words of the man who had loved him, and who had given up his own life in loyalty to his faith. But other words, too, seemed to be spoken aloud to him, words in a girl's sweet voice,—words of love and pleading. Again he felt the touch of her hand upon him—the soft touch, with its strange, terrible strength to hold him to her, to restrain him from putting her away.

With the groan of a tortured spirit, he thrust the vision from him, and threw himself face downward on the rock. He cried for help to Heaven, and his voice seemed to go out into fathomless

space, to a region of emptiness, where there was no ear to hear. He was sinking, sinking, calling for a hand to stretch forth and save him; but there was no such hand. His face touched the dew-wet rocks, his ears heard the sighing of the wind and dash of the waves; and, louder than these, they heard the siren voice, luring him to sin. These things he knew; these were realities. But the everlasting arms, the listening ear, the answering voice, of the omniscient, ever-present God, were but fables—fables formed from fancy, or fear, in the heart of man. For now, in the hour of his trial, when he appealed to the heart of the Father to sustain His child, His weak and tempted child, that heart gave no response. As well might he have appealed to a stone, and he cried in his despair, “There is no God!” Mistrusted by his fellows, his will failing him—his strong, manly will in which he had been confident—without faith, it was useless, useless, to keep up the fight; and, presently, he would yield. Then for a time he lay on the rock, and let his thoughts throng on him as they would, without effort to put them away.

But, following his cry of despair, he seemed to hear another cry—the cry that went out from the darkness on Calvary—that cry that has at times brought the Man Divine nearer than any other to the despairing heart—the cry of the human, yet divine, “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?”

The thought of the lonely man of Nazareth, the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, came to the lonely, despairing man, as it never had come to him—nay, never could have come to him—before. Surely, that old, wonderful story must be true. Could any fabrication so meet the needs of man? In that Man Divine, manhood had been consecrated and uplifted, that manhood through all ages might be purified and uplifted, too. He had passed through temptation, agony, and despair, and had come forth victorious, giving to other tempted, despairing men the assurance, “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”

But the young man's faith was weak, and doubts and questionings beset him again. He lay on the rock, and pressed his head against the hard stone, as if he could thus still the tormenting voices. Presently it seemed to him that he was no longer alone. The spirit of Jean de Brébeuf was with him, to comfort and sustain him, as at their last meeting he had promised he would be, if permitted by Heaven. Léon had smiled at the stories of spirit visitants, of voices from the invisible, in which some of his companions so devoutly believed. It may be it was because his nerves were in a super-sensitive condition, his imagination disordered, his reason no longer capable of separating the real from the unreal; but it served. Brébeuf, his friend, was beside him, and he told him his story, as to the

living man, besought him to pray with him, and for him, to Heaven, that he might have strength to conquer.

He rose at length, with resolve, from the spot where he had cast himself in weakness and despair. Temptation beset him still; but he felt in himself the power to overcome it. The pain of severing with his own hand the tie that had drawn Dorothy to him seemed as sharp as it had been at any moment of his trial; but he knew that he would do it. She would turn her appealing eyes to him, and plead piteously and vainly. It were easier to pierce her heart of flesh and dull the light of her eyes forever than so to wound her spirit; yet he must do the harder thing. She would misunderstand, believe that he was cruel, that he did not love her; and he must bear it.

He would not go to her until he felt assured it would be safe to venture again on the water. Then he rose, and trod the rock firmly till he reached the place where he had left her.

XXIII

Dorothy's Confession

Dorothy had seen in Léon's eyes an expression that she had never observed in them before; and when he had left her, and she sat by the fire, a realization of its meaning came to her. Hauteroche had insinuated; others had dropped hints; but she had not understood. She had associated De Charolais with the priesthood, and no thought of him as a lover had ever occurred to her. She had overheard a conversation between Caradeuc and Nialona, when Caradeuc had said that Léon might obtain a dispensation, leave the Society, and marry, if he chose. Nialona had answered indignantly; but Dorothy had not understood that the discussion had any reference to herself. Now she recalled words regarding the reasons for Léon's banishment. She understood his embarrassment in her presence, in her announcement that she had sought him. Her face burned, she dropped her head in her hands, and wondered what she ought to do.

Presently she rose, took her dress from the tree on which it hung, and held it so close to the fire that it would have burned had it not been damp.

After awhile, though it was far from dry, she put it on. Then she sat, looking into the fire and thinking, until, spite of anxious thought, her head drooped and she dozed.

When Léon returned, he found her sleeping. As she lay near the fire, her head resting on her arm, she looked so pathetically young, so childlike, that he dreaded to awake her, to give his hard sentence. He wondered if he could command his voice, his eyes, so they should not betray his secret—if he had not already betrayed it.

As he watched her, he remembered that she had said that Hauteroche was not a man of honor; yet he, the man she had trusted as a friend, had meditated a deeper wrong against her.

She smiled in her sleep, her lips parted, and she murmured something he could not hear; but there was a joy on her face he had never seen on it in its waking time.

He must rouse her. To watch her thus would unman him.

"Dorothy, Mademoiselle Dorothy," he called; "wake, it is time to rise."

She sat up, gazed about her, and looked bewildered.

"Ah," she said presently, "I had forgotten this island. I was far away."

She had not been dreaming of him!

"I was sorry to disturb you, for I know well you

need more rest," he said, commanding his voice as well as he could. "But—the wind has gone down, and—we may venture to set forth. You may rest in the canoe. It is large. I will spread the rug so it will be a soft couch."

He had feared she would make a pitiful plea; but she did not say a word; her face flushed and paled; he thought she would sob presently; it would be harder to resist the appeal of her tears than of her words.

He tried to justify himself. "Do not think I have no pity for you," he said brokenly. "Ah, I know your life is lonely; that you have many hard things to bear. Yet, knowing all, I must take you back. Some day, when you are older, you will know I had to do it for your sake. But, though Father Ragueneau is quiet and appears stern, he has a kind heart. I believe he will not reproach you. And, most surely, he will protect you; do not fear that Hauteroche will dare to vex you again."

She answered quietly, "You are right. I—knew not what I did. I will go back, I will bear whatever may come."

Her calmness surprised him; she appeared to have grown older since he had awaked her.

"I will make ready the canoe. Then do you follow me to the beach."

"No, stay but a little time; I will tell you all."

"Not now," he said, nervously, fearing to listen

to her heart's confession. "We must make no delay. When we have returned I will hear."

"The Superior will not suffer me to speak with you."

"On the water, as we journey back," he suggested. While he paddled the canoe, and in the darkness, he might listen to a part of her story, might prevent her making any admissions that in later years she would regret. Yet would it not be sweet to hear from her guileless lips her words of love for him? His manliness forbade. He would protect her against herself.

She insisted, "Neither on the island nor on the water; but here. It is right that I should tell you. It is your right to know the truth. I trust you. I will tell you of my past life. Promise me but one thing, promise that you will never speak of it to any one on earth."

He was not a priest to hear confessions; yet he believed he was justified in giving the promise. He was confident that her story could reveal nothing that would compromise her.

"I promise," he said. "You may trust me. Without your permission I will never repeat it."

"Sit there," she said, pointing to a log by the fire, at a little distance. She had assumed direction, though hitherto she had appealed to him to tell her what she should do.

When they were seated, she was silent for a few

moments, and her face was very pale when she began her story.

"I told you that when the Indians attacked us I was separated from my companions and lost in the forest. That was true, but it was not all the truth. In the fright and confusion I escaped from those who called themselves my guardians. So desperate was I, that though I knew I might fall into the hands of the Indians, that wild beasts might devour me, or that I might perish from hunger and cold, I would have welcomed death; though I was afraid, O, terribly afraid!" She paused and gave a little shudder. "I had one hope, the hope that a white settlement was at hand. You know that hope was not in vain, and how I found my refuge.

"I have told you that those in whose care I had been placed had no love for me, that they were stern and hard. But—there was one with them, a man of more than middle age, one who was likewise stern of visage. I think not that he—loved me; yet—he desired to make me his wife."

She stopped and bent her head; her face was suffused with color. "I tell you this because I will tell you all, though I would fain forget it. He had spoken to those who called themselves my guardians, and they would not heed my pleas. He was unmoved when I told him I loved him not; my guardians were unmoved; they repeated that when

we should arrive at a settlement and find a minister, I must be wedded to him. When it was possible, I avoided his presence; but, together in the wilderness as we were, it was not always possible; yet if he dared to lay his hand on mine, I drew it away in anger; then came there on his face a grim smile that filled me with dread, and he said, ‘Do as you will now, but my time will come; when you are my wife, you must obey.’ So when word came that we approached some settlement of white people, I fell into despair; one hope only came to me, perchance the strangers would protect me; but how knew I what tale they would tell of me; so the minister would be persuaded to wed me to that man whether I would or no. I fled. Were it in your power, would you give me to their hands again?”

“Far be it from me! I would protect you against them all.”

“Ah, well I know you would. But—the Superior, he would believe that duty called him to seek the man, and give me up; therefore I have told him nothing. He knows not where to seek my guardians. At Sainte Marie, I was often in terror lest they discover me; but I have ceased to fear it. I know not what has been their fate. I trust they escaped the Indians, and found the country of the English.”

“You might safely have told the Superior. He

would not permit you to be made a wife against your will, if he could protect you. In his eyes, it would be a sin."

She shook her head. "I dare not tell him."

She did not speak again, and Léon asked, "Shall we set forth now?"

"I have not told you all. I loved not that stern elderly man; yet had he been young and comely, I had no love to give him. In England, cruel hands divided me from one who had all my heart; and so long as I live he will have my heart, though I never behold him again."

She dropped her eyes, but they seemed irresistibly drawn to Léon, and she looked up.

His face was ghastly white and drawn. "What is it?" she cried. Then she would have recalled the words, for she understood that she had wounded him sorely.

"Léon, my Brother Léon," she said, with a sob in her voice, "I tell you because as a brother you are dear to me, as a brother I trust you."

He did not answer. He appeared stunned, and she went on, hardly knowing what to say. "Monsieur René le Breton begged me to look on him as a brother, and I consented. Yet he is not as you are. He is but a frivolous youth. I have told him nothing. But to you, my Brother Léon, I lay bare my heart."

He forced himself to reply, "Tell me all. Why did they part you?"

“I will go back to days of my childhood. I lived in a pleasant house, in the midst of a sweet garden. I was a happy child, and they whom I called father and mother reared me with such tender care I knew not that they had no living child. In a graveyard near by was a marble that bore the name of their infant daughter. I thought of her as my sister. My mother told me I had come to her after Elizabeth died. One day my father—I can call him by no other name—was brought home to us hurt unto death. He lived but a few hours, and before the morning light my mother had followed him. They who came to our home said it was well that she was with him. But how could I say those words? I had loved them, and I was desolate.

“His sister came. I had called her Aunt Ellen; but it had seemed to me at all times she did not love me. She wept for him, but she said no words of tenderness to me. If I wept, if I clung to the still forms of those whom I had lost, it angered her; she sent me away, or said strange words of me that I did not then understand.

“On the day when they were laid to rest I was bidden to a room where I found some grave men assembled, and my Aunt Ellen was with them. Then they told me that no will of my father’s could be found, that my aunt had inherited everything; that I had nothing of my own; but that in her goodness she would provide for me; that she would send

me to a school. And, indeed, it pleased me better to know that I should not live with her. Then the thought came to me that I, my father's own child, was nearer to him even than his sister. Why should she possess everything? And I put the question in words.

"Then my aunt answered, sternly, 'You were no child of his nor of hers, yet they reared you and gave you of the best. Is this your gratitude that you reproach them because they have left you no fortune?'

"I could not speak, but I looked at the grave men, and they confirmed her words. They said doubtless my father had not foreseen that his life would be thus taken from him, or he would have made provision for me, and that his worthy sister, knowing this, would have a care that I should lack nothing, though I had no lawful claim upon her. She cried out that I should at the least give her a word of thanks. I could not speak that which I felt not, and my lips were dumb.

"I looked from one to another, and their eyes would not meet mine. It may be that they grieved for me. I saw a tear on the face of one who sat near to me, and I heard his words, spoken low, 'Alas, poor maiden, a grievous cross indeed hath been laid upon thee.'

"There came to my memory words and looks of which I had thought little while my father and

mother lived; I recalled a day when Aunt Ellen had seemed to reprove my mother, and had said in my hearing, 'You fail, Elizabeth, in your duty. In a day to come, mark me well, the child will hear the truth from other lips.'

"The place to which they gave the name of school deserved not to be so called. The teacher in whose care I was placed but seldom taught me a lesson. In the house with us lived but one old woman servant and a girl of my own age. She was said to be a pupil with me, and we spent much time together. She talked to me of lovers, of fine dresses, and of many things of which I was ignorant. My mother had educated me at home, I had associated little with others of my years; and, in truth, as Emily told me, I knew nothing of the world. Our teacher knew little of the books we read—we had but few—or of our conversation; our table was scantily spread, and our clothing was neglected; but she never spoke to us harshly, and for that I was thankful. My mother's words had been so mild that I greatly dreaded a harsh tongue. We spent much time in the fields that lay about the house, and had it not been that I longed continually for my parents, my life had not been unhappy."

She stopped abruptly. She had not intended to give so many details; but her perception of Léon's distress at the mention of her lover induced her to defer a return to the subject. Presently she attacked it boldly.

“Then came that one on whose face I had looked but once ere I loved him. I saw him many times; he lived near by; and soon he told me of his love for me; and I was comforted in my loneliness. Yet in this we both did wrong; our meetings were by stealth; I said no word to my teacher. I told her no falsehood; I only held my peace. But for that sin I have many times gone on my knees in penitence. When my mother lived, I hid nothing from her. There came a day when I was summoned to the house, and in the sitting-room I found my teacher, and he whom I loved was there, and beside him were two strangers, whom I afterward discovered to be his parents, and his face was pale and sad.

“My teacher upbraided me bitterly. She said I had lied and deceived her, and that she had had no part in our meetings, and was guilty of no wrong. But he came to my side, and said the wrong, if wrong there were, was wholly his own; that he had urged me to keep silence when I would have spoken. And that was true; but never would I have said it. Then came in my aunt hurriedly. They had sent for her, and she had set forth in haste. And she upbraided me bitterly, for she said I had caused her name to be connected with my ill doings, of which she had no knowledge. She said I was no kith nor kin of hers. And she spoke evil words of the mother who gave me birth, and of

whom I had known nothing. But I learned afterward that neither knew she anything; for I had been laid at the door of the parents who reared me, with a sum of money and goodly clothing; and with no word save this, written in a fine hand, 'Her name is Dorothy.' And thereafter no search had revealed anything concerning her. With all my heart I believe that she was a true and saintly woman, led by sore extremity to abandon her child, and that death took her away ere she could seek me again. Thus, too, does Godfrey believe, for he assured me of it with tender words. When my aunt spoke thus, I would have fallen in a swoon had not Godfrey caught me in his arms; and thereafter he stood with his arm about me, as if to shield me. His parents appealed to my aunt to remove me far, and spare them the grief and shame of beholding their son united in marriage to one whose birth would bring a scandal on their house. And she answered that they need not fear, she would remove me far, indeed. They said he lacked some months of his coming of age, and must obey their will. They would have taken him away, and my heart was like to break. But he turned to his mother, and pitifully besought her to give him the grace of a few words with me alone; and to that she consented. We went apart to a room adjoining, and he held me in his arms, and pressed kisses on my face, and vowed that until death he would be true

to me, that he would seek me the world over, and never would he be forced to wed another; and that, too, I promised him. The time was but short until his mother entered and summoned him; then with a groan that, as it were, rent his heart, he left me, and I fell to the ground as one dead."

She broke off, hid her face in her hands again, and shook as if with sobbing; but her eyes were dry. When she raised her head, Léon sat, white and still. She began to speak rapidly. "There is little more to tell. My aunt took me away, and placed me on that day with those who carried me across the sea. I pleaded with her not to put the sea between us, but she would not heed. The rest you know."

Yet Léon made no answer.

"Léon, Brother Léon," she cried, piteously, "have you, too, turned from me? I love to call you Brother Léon. In name, as in other things, you remind me of him. His name was Godfrey Lyon Dermount, and I called him 'Lion,' because he was strong and brave. That was always my name for him. Brother Léon, I have done many thoughtless acts; but grievously have I sorrowed for them all. Think not evil of me. I have meant no wrong."

"No, little Sister Dorothy, I have not turned from you; nor will I so long as I live. You have called me brother and friend, and that will I be to you always. And now let us haste to the island, for the night goes fast."

“And you have promised you will keep what I have given you within your own heart. You will repeat no word of it to the Superior.”

“Not one word, except you permit me; yet it were better for you to trust him.”

“Ah, no, I cannot, I cannot; to no heart but yours, my Brother Léon, could I have laid bare my own.”

As they went to the boat, he asked her, “And your own name, what is it?”

“Have you forgotten that I have no name? The name I bore, the name of those whom I had called my father and mother, I may not disclose, even to you, for on the day when my Aunt Ellen gave me into the hands of those who took me from my own land, she forced me to take a solemn vow that I would not so much as mention that name, nor ever permit myself to be called by it, so greatly she feared, thus she told me, that I might again bring discredit upon her. She made me take also a vow of silence concerning all my history, and until this moment I have kept it. To no ear but yours, my Brother Léon, have I told it, and to you it is in sacred confidence. I had not meant to disclose it, even to you; but——”

He had stooped to lay the rug for her in the boat. He was glad that his face was turned from her, that she should not see the color that rushed over it.

He understood why she had told him, had broken her word because she had read his love for her, and would not deceive him.

“ They called me Dorothy Mill,” she said; “ but it was not pleasing to me; it was not my own; until I learn what name is mine by right, I will be known only as Dorothy.”

XXIV

The Return of the Wanderers

They spoke few words on their homeward way. Dorothy lay in the canoe on the rug that Léon had arranged for her, and when he had passed the dangerous channels, he paddled on, and let his gloomy thoughts have their way. His love was selfish yet. Until he knew her story, the bitterness of parting had been softened by the belief that she loved him; a sweet grief indeed compared with his desolateness when he heard that another had her heart. In this thought all others were lost for the time; the Superior might accuse him of disobedience, of deception, might refuse to listen to his explanation; he cared not.

It was long past midnight when they drew near, but lights were gleaming through the trees; people were moving about, apparently in search of Dorothy.

Léon heard the sound of a paddle, and a canoe came round a point of land. In the darkness, he did not recognize the boatman, but when they were in sight Hauteroche cried, "Who goes there?"

"It is I, Raoul Hauteroche," answered Léon haughtily.

"Have you seen aught of Mademoiselle Dorothy?"

"Mademoiselle Dorothy is here and safe. We seek the Superior. Where may we find him?"

"Mademoiselle Dorothy returns with you, and you seek the Superior," retorted Hauteroche insolently. "It were better for you to hide from him, for you will get but a sorry reception."

"I have no cause to hide, Raoul Hauteroche, but I doubt not you will find reason to avoid his presence when he has heard what I have to relate of you."

When he had spoken the words, he regretted his thoughtlessness; what he had said might serve to bring Hauteroche's wrath on Dorothy, who neither moved nor spoke.

Other canoes came up, and René le Breton cried, "Have you brought word of her?"

"She has returned with the worthy Léon de Charolais," jeered Hauteroche.

Le Breton paddled quickly up. "Is she living? Is she safe?" he asked anxiously.

Dorothy sat up. "Yes, Monsieur le Breton, I am safe; I am unharmed, save for the waves that dashed over my canoe; yet I should have perished had not—" she was about to say "Brother Léon," but hesitated. Then she remembered that the

Hurons and the boys always addressed him as Brother Léon de Charolais, and she went on, "I should indeed have perished on the water had not Brother Léon de Charolais come to my rescue."

"And how came it that the worthy Brother Léon de Charolais was so near?" demanded Haute-roche.

"I was on my way hither with tidings for the Superior," said Léon, addressing René. "It was dark, the wind was high, and the water was rough; then I saw a canoe tossed upon the waves, and in answer to my cry, I heard the voice of Mademoiselle Dorothy."

"Ah, Mademoiselle Dorothy," said René, with gentle reproach, "why did you venture forth when the water was rough and the storm at hand? We have been in sore distress for your sake."

"I have done wrong," said Dorothy meekly. "Indeed, I grieve deeply. Alas, how often I have caused sorrow to those who have been good to me!"

"Ah, do not reproach yourself. We rejoice now that you have returned to us."

Unmindful that the canoe was unsteady, Dorothy leaned over the side and said, in a low voice, "Brother René, will the Superior greet me with unusual sternness? Is he angered beyond forgiveness?"

"No, no, do not fear. He shall not upbraid you.

We will all speak in your defence. And, indeed, he will greet you with joy, for he has feared for your life."

Léon caught her arm, "Have a care, Mademoiselle Dorothy. The vessel is but light, and readily overturned."

She balanced herself in the centre, and said no more until they reached the land.

René's shout, "We have found her; she is safe," had been carried to the fort, and Fathers Rague-neau, Bressani, and their colleagues, hastened to the shore. They had searched with the others, and had retired to the residence for prayer.

Léon and Dorothy had landed, and were surrounded by an excited group when the Fathers approached. The circle was aglow with torches, so they saw plainly the young man and the girl; but the voices were indistinguishable in the hubbub of words.

The Superior's face grew sterner when he saw De Charolais. He had believed that the young man was many miles away.

Before he addressed a word to Dorothy, he said coldly, "And is it thus that you obey my commands, Léon?"

"Reverend Father," replied the young man, "an emergency arose among our people which made immediate consultation with you desirable. Under circumstances so unforeseen, I believed that

you would pardon my apparent disregard of your directions so soon as you should have heard my reasons."

"And how comes it that you return here with Mademoiselle Dorothy?"

"I believe truly that by the guidance of Heaven I found her, when, in the storm, she was in peril of death. By your permission, Reverend Father, I will accompany you to the residence, and there tell you all."

"Be it so," said Ragueneau.

He turned, and began to walk toward the fort, and Léon followed with Dorothy. "Do not fear," he said, in a low voice, to the trembling girl; "when I have told him all, he will not be angry with you."

Ragueneau had rejoiced when he heard of Dorothy's safety, and was ready to forgive her for her recklessness. But when he saw her with Léon, he was sorely perplexed, and did not address a word to her.

Dorothy had thought of many things while she rested in the canoe. Léon's distress at the recital of her love story had confirmed the thought that had startled her when they stood by the fire. She remembered how often, at the palisades, she had begged him to come soon again, how she had told him that his presence comforted her, that she was lonely without him. She had been so absorbed by the remembrance of her own sorrow that she had

been blind to many things. She had thought it was his pity for her that led him to speak to her in tones so different from those he used in his words to Nialona; that his emotion when parting from her was due to the same cause; but she knew better now. She had been brought up apart from the world, and was childlike in many things, older than her years in others. She had something to tell Léon, something that would perhaps justify her if he thought she had willingly deceived him.

As they walked behind the Superior and Bresani, she said very low, "Brother Léon."

"What is it, my Sister Dorothy?"

"I—desire to tell you—on the first day when I saw you, when you came to me to speak in English, I perceived in you a resemblance to—my Godfrey, so that—from the beginning—before I had many words with you—I put my trust in you for his sake—always you seemed nearer to me than any other. I—knew you were good and true, as he is."

Léon had slackened his steps, so the Fathers should not hear. But he did not answer.

"You—are taller than he," she went on, hesitatingly, "though he is of goodly height. And I doubt not that some would say that your features are more comely; yet he is fair to look upon. However that may be, his heart is noble, and well I know that yours is noble, too."

Still he said no word, and she feared she had hurt him.

“ Brother Léon—if—at any time I have spoken words, done any acts, that have given you pain, I am grieved; I repent it sorely. It has not been with intention. Your kindness to me has been great; but——”

“ Do not grieve, my Sister Dorothy, I know well the goodness of your heart——”

The Superior turned, and motioned to Léon to hasten. When the two reached him, he directed Léon to walk beside Bressani, while he accompanied Dorothy. But he did not speak to her until they arrived at the residence, which stood within the unfinished walls of the fort.

He led the way to a small room, which had been set apart for the use of the priests from the mission to the Tobacco Nation, in case they should be able to visit the island. So far it had been unoccupied. He pointed to a hard bed, and said to Dorothy, “ The hour is late, and rest is needful; remain here for the night. In the morning, I will tell you further.”

“ Will you not order also some refreshment for the young girl? ” said Bressani.

The Superior looked at Dorothy’s white face, and answered, “ Bring her a portion of the strengthening cordial from our store, with bread and meat, if our larder is not empty of meat.”

“ I thank you, I want nothing,” said Dorothy feebly.

But presently Father Bressani returned with a hot cordial in a silver cup—a much-prized vessel, and some cakes of corn. The larder contained no meat.

Ragueneau had gone out with Léon. Bressani looked with pity on the fragile girl, and said, “ Eat my daughter, and then sleep. Yet, ere I leave you, if you have aught on your mind that troubles you, tell it to me, and so find rest. When you left us in the storm, what purpose had you, and whom did you seek? ”

“ I sought no one, Father. I but——”

She was very weak; she trembled, and her face quivered, as if she were on the point of tears.

“ Have I at any time said to you a harsh word, my daughter, that you fear me?” asked Bressani softly.

She looked into his face, rugged, yet gentle. He bore scars on his face and hands from tortures that he had received from the Indians. He had not the grand physique of Brébeuf, yet in some ways he resembled him.

“ Father, I sought but to flee from my misery. I set forth, knowing not whither I went; and it may be the good Father in Heaven guided me to that place on the waters where I was met by the Brother Léon de Charolais. To him I have spoken of the trouble that drove me from this island; he has my permission to relate it to the Superior. Pray ask me not further, Father; he will tell you all.”

"Rest then, my daughter, and—trust us. We wish you naught but good."

When he had gone, Dorothy drank the cordial, and ate a portion of the cake, and felt much revived. She thought she could not sleep; but presently her head drooped, and she lay on the bed, and slept soundly.

The sun was high when the sound of footsteps roused her. She sat up, and saw Madame Couture.

"I come for you," said the Indian woman. "From this time you live in my house. So says the good Father."

Dorothy had not undressed. She rose, and tried to fasten her tumbled hair, and followed Madame Couture from the room.

In an adjoining room the Superior awaited her.

"Your home will be with Madame Couture," he said, and Dorothy thought there was unusual gentleness in his manner. "With her, you will be protected, and she will treat you with kindness. But, ere you go, you must give me your promise that you will never again venture on the water, or wander away alone, far from Madame Couture's lodge. You have more than once been the cause of grave anxiety to us all."

"I promise, Father," said Dorothy meekly.

Then she followed Madame Couture, and, as she went, looked in vain for a glimpse of Léon.

XXV

Departure of Léon and Bressani for Quebec

When Léon found himself alone with the Superior, he explained his motives in seeking Isle St. Joseph, his meeting with Dorothy, how they had taken refuge on the rocky island, and the reasons she had given him for setting out in the storm. He told his story so frankly, and the Superior's rigid questioning and cross-examination were so ineffective in finding any flaw in the evidence that he was convinced of the truth of the young man's words. In reply to Léon's question, what should be done for Dorothy's protection against Hauteroche's advances, Ragueneau replied that with Madame Couture she would not be subjected to the jealousies of the Huron girls, and that Hauteroche should leave the island within a few hours in charge of some Hurons, on an expedition which would not return for several months at least. If he should deny the accusation, the Superior would obtain a statement from Dorothy on the subject.

Bressani had come in, and his eyes were fixed on Léon when the Superior put the question: "Tell

me truly, Léon de Charolais, as it were in the sacredness of the confessional, have you at any time spoken word of love to this maiden? ”

Léon's face grew pale, and he hesitated a moment before he answered, “ Father, I have not.”

Ragueneau was disturbed. The young man's hesitation seemed suspicious.

“ Have you by any action, any look or sign, given her cause to believe that you loved her? ”

The blood rushed to Léon's face, and again he hesitated. When he answered, his voice was low, “ Father, if word, deed, or look of mine has conveyed to her that belief, it has been, on my part, without intention. Of this I may assure you: from her manner toward me, I am convinced that, while she has a regard for me, a feeling of kindness—I judge so from many words she has spoken—she has never thought of me as a lover.”

“ How could you know this had you not spoken to her of love? ”

“ I have felt assured of it, yet, I repeat with all sacredness, as I were in the confessional, without word of love spoken to her. She is as a child in her innocence; she cannot hide her heart.”

“ Yet you have let your heart wander from the Church to which you are pledged, and have given it to this maiden.”

Léon bent his head in his hands. When he raised it, he did not look up. “ It went from me,

whether I would or no. I have sought, God knows how earnestly, to be faithful to my vow to my mother, and the pledge I gave to another, on the eve of my departure from the mission.

“It is true, my heart has gone out to her, whether I would or no; but of that, as I have said, I have never uttered word to her, though Heaven knows I have been sorely tempted. I tell you this for her sake, that you may know she is innocent and true.”

Bressani's eyes filled with tears. Perhaps, who knows, some memory of his young life was stirred.

“Reverend Father,” he said presently, “a word with you alone.”

The two priests retired, and conversed for some time. When they returned Léon sat where they had left him, his head resting on his arms upon the table.

He started and raised himself when he heard their approaching footsteps; but not before they had perceived his attitude of dejection.

“De Charolais,” said the Superior, with unusual gentleness, “at noon Father Bressani, with a company of Hurons, sets out to seek Quebec, there to obtain, if possible, reinforcements for our mission. It is necessary that some one go from Quebec to the Superior General for instructions. It has been decided that you accompany the party to Quebec; thence, if deemed advisable, you may be sent to the General. Monsieur le Breton will carry my mes-

sages to your men. You may rest now. All necessary preparations for your journey will be made for you."

Léon appeared dazed by the sudden announcement. "But how is it possible to prepare in such brief time for a journey so difficult?"

"Everything is already in order for my departure," said Bressani. "The few things of which you have need can soon be made ready. Take now your needed rest; do not leave your room until you are roused to partake of refreshments before setting forth. We will then journey till we reach our halting place for the night."

Léon obeyed almost mechanically. He was weary, body and mind, and spite of troubled thoughts of Dorothy he fell into a deep sleep, from which he was roused but a short time before a hurried departure. He had no opportunity to send her a message; he could not even catch a glimpse of her face. Many Huron women stood on the bank when the fleet of canoes set out; but she was not with them. He knew she had been kept in Madame Couture's lodge, and would not be permitted to leave it until he was far on his way. He watched the island until it was but a dim line on the waters; then, with heavy heart and stifled moan, paddled away with his companions.

XXVI

A Dreary Winter

As she had been directed, Madame Couture kept a watchful eye on her charge, and it was not until Monsieur Couture arrived at the lodge in the evening that she heard that De Charolais had accompanied Father Bressani's party to Quebec.

"To Quebec!" cried the girl. "So far, and the way so full of peril! And when will they return?"

"Who knows?" replied Monsieur Couture curtly. He was a practical man, who had little sympathy with sentiment. He, with others, had suspicions of the reasons why Léon had been sent off, and he believed that the rough travel of the wilderness would soon lead him to forget his fancy for the maiden. A boy's fancy, Couture called it; for he was many years older than Léon. He had always looked on Dorothy as a most troublesome young person, and was not well pleased by her introduction to his household. But the request of Father Ragueneau was regarded as the equivalent of a command that must not be disobeyed.

Madame Couture had been married for several years, and was much farther advanced in civiliza-

tion than the majority of her Huron sisters on the island. She had a family of young children, and Dorothy was expected to assist her in the care of them. The priests said it was desirable that she should be occupied, though they cautioned the Indian woman to remember that the young girl was delicate. Madame Couture was not unkind, but her perceptions were somewhat dull; she had been accustomed to a life of drudgery, and had little idea of the limits of her young assistant's strength.

The missionaries were anxious that she should be happy and well cared for; but the many needs of their large flock demanded all the time they had to give, and they seldom saw her except at the daily brief service in the chapel, which she was obliged to attend with Madame Couture.

The Couture house was on the side of the island opposite that of the Huron village, but was near enough to the fort to be within easy reach in case of attack. Madame Couture's aged mother lived with her, and one or the other watched Dorothy almost continually. They observed the Superior's instruction literally, and went beyond his intentions. She was rarely left alone for a moment, lest she should attempt to escape or do herself some harm. Their supervision had not the jealous and suspicious watchfulness that Nialona had exercised, but it was exceedingly irksome.

In the late autumn, many Hurons who had sub-

sisted miserably in the northern forests and islands, joined their countrymen at St. Joseph, until several thousand were gathered under the protection of the missionaries. They were housed in large lodges of bark and saplings, after the Huron fashion, each house containing eight or ten families. Widows without children and children without parents were there; and of these broken families many were almost perishing from famine. Few had strength to labor, and scarcely any had made provision for the winter. The priests had done what they could to meet the necessity. They had sent men to buy smoked fish from the northern Algonquins, and employed Indians to gather acorns in the woods. They had collected several hundred bushels, and ate this food boiled with ashes, to diminish its bitterness, or pounded and mixed with corn.

As winter advanced, the people in the Huron village died by scores. The priests and their men buried the bodies, and the Indians, gnawed by famine, dug them from the earth or the snow and fed on them. Then pestilence appeared, and nearly half of those who had sought refuge on the island died from famine or disease.

Meanwhile, spite of intense cold and deep snow, there was continual fear of an Iroquois attack, and from sunset to daybreak the French sentries walked their rounds.

The priests rose before dawn, and spent the time until sunrise in their private devotions. Then the bell of their chapel rang, and the Indians came in crowds. The little chapel was not nearly large enough to accommodate all at once; so, after each service—a mass, followed by a prayer and a few words of exhortation—the hearers dispersed to make room for others, and the chapel was filled ten or twelve times until all had had their turn. Nearly all on the island now professed Christianity. While the services were going on, other priests were hearing confessions, or giving advice and encouragement in private. At 9 o'clock the Indians returned to the village, and the priests soon followed. Their cassocks were all worn out, and they dressed chiefly in skins. They visited the Indian houses, and gave to those who were in most urgent need small scraps of hide, each stamped with a particular mark. The recipients afterward presented these leather tickets at the fort and received a few acorns, a little boiled maize, or a piece of smoked fish, according to the stamp that their ticket bore. Two hours before sunset, the bell of the chapel rang again for services.

At one time, the superstitious Indians had been in great fear of the pictures and images of the Jesuits. They had believed the litanies were incantations, and, during an epidemic, declared that the clock gave the stroke of death; so that the Fathers,

to calm their fears, were obliged to stop its striking. A picture of the Last Judgment had been an especial object of dread, they thinking the dragons and serpents represented thereon were the demons of the pest. But these fears no longer troubled them. They had perfect confidence in their instructors.

Kishik died suddenly early in the winter. Dorothy had not seen her for some time, for Nialona and Washaka appeared to be so embittered against her that she avoided them; besides, she had little opportunity to visit any one. She went with Madame Couture to the chapel, and saw the body of her old friend in its rough coffin. Though Kishik had often grumbled on account of the trouble Dorothy's long illness had given, she had been kind in her way, and Dorothy had been attached to her. But she shed no tears. In the earlier days of her separation from Godfrey, before and after her arrival at Sainte Marie, she had passed through many perils, events had crowded one upon another, and excitement had to some extent sustained her. But for months she had been practically without companionship, the daily life had been a round of monotonous work; the only news had been the tale of the fast decreasing population on the island. At first, her heart had been deeply stirred by pity, but now she hardly felt that emotion. She partook of the general apathy and hopelessness, and accepted

with indifference the events of life as they came to her.

The daily services in the chapel were welcomed by her, though she continued to reject the appeals of the missionaries regarding her spiritual state. Their faith was not that of the only mother she had known; it was not the faith of her Godfrey. Yet when she marvelled at their serenity amid privation and disaster, the thought came to her that could she share their trust, she, too, might be sustained and cheered. She would have been glad, too, to relieve their anxiety; she knew they feared that should she die now her soul must die eternally; yet, to their urging she replied gently that she could not do as they wished.

The Couture family had not been permitted to suffer from insufficient food. Maize and smoked fish were supplied from the fort. The fare was coarse, and seldom varied, but it was seldom stinted. Though bands of Iroquois roamed on the mainland, parties of Huron had ventured on the winter hunt. From time to time they returned with venison and game, and a portion was always sent to the Couture house, on Dorothy's account. The Fathers were powerless to prevent the starvation of large numbers of Indians; but this one white girl, who had been so strangely sent to them, must be cared for. Yet, frail as she had always been since she had come to them, they saw that she was fail-

ing. She had of necessity to endure physical discomfort for which she was less fitted than any other islander. The Indians had been born to it, and the Frenchmen were hardy. Snow drifted through the crevices of the bark lodge. Provisions froze hard. Boiled maize left from supper had to be thawed for breakfast, and frozen meat or fish must needs be chopped with an axe. But wretched Indian women were eating the inner bark of trees to still the pangs of hunger, and the white girl would gladly have shared her portion with them.

XXVII

Brother René

Late in the winter, René le Breton returned to the island after an absence of several months. His first sight of Dorothy was in the chapel. Her head was bowed, and she did not appear to notice anything. Dejection was apparent in every line of face and figure. Her eyes were dull, her skin was sallow, there was no youthful softness in the hollow cheeks. Even her hair had lost its brightness, and was harsh and dry. When she lifted her head and saw René, she gave a little start; her face lighted for a moment, but quickly lapsed into apathy.

René had no opportunity to speak to her when the services were over. She followed Madame Couture and her children, and had left the church before he could break away from the greetings of some old comrades. In the afternoon, he spoke to the Superior.

“Father, you see Mademoiselle Dorothy daily, and it may be you do not perceive the change in her; I, returning after long absence, see that she is not alone wasting bodily, but that there is some disease of the mind.”

“Nay, my son, we have observed the change; it has deeply troubled us. We have done what we could for her bodily health; but we know well that there is a sickness of soul that we cannot touch, for she has refused continually to confide to us the cause. We fear that this persistent refusal hides some wrong-doing in her past. We have pleaded with her most gently; but she will tell us nothing.”

René was silent. He knew that the Superior's grave air always gave Dorothy the impression that he was displeased with her.

Ragueneau went on, “We desire to make her life more tolerable. She has been delicately nurtured; were it possible we would shield her from hardship; but that cannot be. She is surrounded by famine and despair, and she must bear her part. Monsieur Couture tells us that she does the work assigned to her, is never wilful, but that her words are few; that she appears to live in a world apart from this place; that her one desire is to be alone.”

“Father, permit me to visit her. She has a friendship for me. It may be in my power to cheer her.”

Father Ragueneau hesitated. He remembered his former anxiety regarding Dorothy's fascinations. But, after some consideration, he gave permission.

In the evening Le Breton arrived at the lodge with a gift of venison for Madame Couture. She

had gone to the Indian village, her aged mother was dozing in the next room, and the children were asleep.

Dorothy opened the door. She received the young man politely, but as indifferently as if he had not returned after a long absence.

“With your permission, Sister Dorothy,” he said, “I will come in and tell you something of my adventures since we met.”

“I thank you, Monsieur le Breton; but do you not remember the Superior does not allow me to receive visits?”

“I have come here with his consent. If I remain at the fort I will come many times if it is agreeable to you, Sister Dorothy.”

She did not answer for a few moments; then she said in a listless voice, “You are kind; it will please me to see you; yet you will find me but dull; when I would converse, I scarce remember what words I would use; perchance I have thought much, and my mind has grown too weary, for now I recall with difficulty from hour to hour, and neglect, unwittingly, the work that I should do.”

“Poor child, poor little Sister Dorothy; you have been without a companion; your life has been too dreary; some recreation may brighten it. You will walk with me. I will draw you on a sledge on the ice. You will grow strong again, and smile again.”

“ Ah, Brother René, I fear not. Would that I could, in return for your kindness! At one time I could make an appearance of happiness; now, I have not even strength for that. But I thank you from my heart.”

But the next day, when Dorothy returned from an outing with René and the Couture children, there was a little color in her face and more life in her voice.

One evening, he showed her a miniature of his mother. She held it in her hand, and looked at it long. “ Ah, she is sweet, her face so full of mother love! You miss her. You hope for the day when you may see her once more.”

“ I do, I long for it,” he said, with much feeling. He looked at her, as if to ask, “ Do you not long to see those who are dear to you? ”

She answered the questioning look. “ I wore about my neck a chain, from which hung the picture of my—of the one whom I had always called mother; but that, with all the gifts I had from her, was taken from me. O, it was cruel, I loved it so; but they could not take her from my heart.”

“ Did your own mother die in your infancy? ” he asked abruptly, and the next moment regretted the words, for Dorothy looked startled, and her face grew paler. “ I—have no recollection of her. I—was left—motherless when I was a babe. But—mother—I knew not till she lay dead that she was

not my own mother—was tender to me as if I had been her own child; too tender, it may be. She spared me all knowledge of the evil of the world, shielded me from all that could hurt me. Ah me, how I have longed to lay my head on her breast, to tell her all that has come to me since she left me; then I cry out on myself for the thought, ‘She is happy; how dare you wish that she should have knowledge of your misery?’ ”

She hid her face in her hands. René’s eyes were blinded by tears. He laid his hand gently on the bowed head. “Had you no one of your own kindred, or no friend?”

“Of my own kin I know not one.”

“But friends, had you no friends?”

“I had—one friend.” She laid her head on the table, and was unmindful of René’s presence. Presently she moaned out some words that he did not hear distinctly. Then came a cry that seemed to be wrung from her heart, and he thought that it was, “O, Léon, Léon!”

He believed now, beyond doubting, that she loved De Charolais.

She seemed unconscious that she had said the name, and when she raised her head, she said brokenly, “I had one friend, Brother René, one who loved me, one whom I love now and will love forever. But we were parted, forbidden to see each other, to speak together again. Ah, Brother René, life has been hard, very hard for me.”

"I know it, I know it, my poor little Sister Dorothy."

"Even beside her dead body, they said such false, such cruel words. And it seemed to me that she must hear and suffer for me, as if the dear, mute lips must open and plead."

From the crisp snow without, they heard the footfalls of M. Couture and his wife. "Brother René," said Dorothy hastily, "promise me, promise me solemnly, you will never, never, repeat to any one, not to a priest in the confessional, what I have said. I had not meant to say it."

René promised, and kept his word. That evening, when he was alone with the Superior, he showed so much emotion when Dorothy's name was mentioned that Ragueneau's anxiety was again aroused for the young man's sake.

Since he had become the keeper of a part of Dorothy's secret, he believed himself to be deeply in love with her. The very fact of her devotion to another made his feeling the keener. He told himself that he desired Dorothy's happiness, yet he had an underlying and melancholy satisfaction in the belief that his rival's pledge to a priestly life and the determination of others to hold him to that pledge put the probability of her union with him out of the question. He grew pale, encouraged a pathetic expression, and the Superior had under consideration a plan to send him away again from the presence of the siren.

But an unlooked-for event changed René from a sighing and hopeless suitor to an ecstatic lover, though he found some difficulty in adjusting himself to his new rôle. Three of the men who had gone to the French settlements in the autumn with Bressani and his party returned at this time, bringing with them many documents for the Fathers and the Frenchmen at the fort. The Superior was relieved by the information that De Charolais had been sent to France. The Frenchmen at the fort received letters that had been many months on their way. To Le Breton came one from his father. It announced that the lady of his heart had at last discovered that she had been mistaken in her feelings, that her true love had been really given to René. She had communicated this discovery to her father, who had conferred with René's father, and all would be satisfactorily arranged if René would return as soon as possible. The young lady had a will of her own, and had refused to give her consent to a marriage that had been arranged for her. Yet René's joy was not unmingled with some pain. The thought of parting from Dorothy gave him some severe twinges. As affairs had turned, he was thankful that she had averted his open declaration to her. He congratulated himself on his constancy to his first love. He would be able with a good conscience to tell her he had always been true to her. He really persuaded himself that he had,

and that his feeling for Dorothy had been but a passing ripple on the deep current of his affections. He was much concerned, however, as to what Dorothy might think. He was aware that he had said many things to her which would naturally lead her to the belief that he had more than a brotherly affection for her; but perhaps she would divine the truth, that such words were but the outcome of his chivalrous pity and tenderness for her. He hoped she would look at it in this way, for he did not wish to fall in her estimation; he knew she had but a poor opinion of men who were fickle in love. When he told her, she congratulated him and roused herself to more interest than he had seen in her since his return. But she was perplexed. His words to her on their arrival on the island in the previous spring had not sounded as would words of the faithful and despairing lover of another woman; she tried to persuade herself that sorrow had drawn him to her, and that his sympathy for her, the need of sympathy for himself, had called forth utterances that appeared to convey more than he had intended.

“Ah, little Sister Dorothy,” he said pensively. “Am I selfish in my joy when I must leave you to your sorrow and hopelessness?”

“Brother René, do not grieve for that. Truly, truly, I rejoice with you. And—also—it brings to me—some hope.”

What could she mean? He debated on her words in his mind, and said absently, what he had not intended for her ears, "Hope, what hope? Will he not be a priest?"

She looked at him questioningly, and he colored. Both were silent for some time; then Dorothy said quietly, without emotion, "Brother René, I know the Superior had reason for anger on that night when I left the island; yet he appeared so deeply displeased when I returned with Brother Léon de Charolais. Brother Léon will be a priest. It would seem that the Reverend Father should have been well satisfied to find me in his care."

René knew she had spoken in reply to his exclamation. Her coolness surprised him. Was she acting?

XXVIII

Abandonment of the Huron Mission

'Returning spring brought little hope to the starving multitudes on the island. The spring fisheries began, and the melting snow uncovered the acorns in the woods; but along the mainland the Iroquois were on the track of their prey. Some of the Hurons chose to face this peril rather than death by starvation. A number set out to cross the ice; but, softened by the spring sun, it gave way, and many were drowned. Those who reached the shore divided into companies of from ten to one hundred persons, and began their fishing. But the watching Iroquois, who had made their way through ice and snow from the towns in Central New York, surprised and surrounded them, and hunted down fugitives from the bands so persistently that, of the numbers who had gone to the mainland, the Jesuits knew of but one who escaped.

Their hearts were further bowed in grief by the news that Charles Garnier had been murdered early in the winter at St. Jean by the Iroquois; and that Noël Chabanel, on his way to Isle St. Joseph, in obedience to an order from the Superior, had been

killed in the woods by a renegade Huron. Brébeuf had been called the lion of the Huron mission, and Garnier the lamb. "But the lamb was as fearless as the lion."

Before leaving Sainte Marie on the Wye to go to his post in the Tobacco Nation, Chabanel had written to his brother in France to regard him as a victim destined for the fires of the Iroquois. He declared that, although naturally timid, he had become wholly indifferent; and believed that only a superhuman power could have wrought such a change in him.

When he had been beset with temptations to beg for a recall from the mission, he had made this vow:

"My Lord Jesus Christ, who, in the admirable disposition of Thy paternal providence, hast willed that I, although most unworthy, should be a co-laborer with the holy apostles in this vineyard of the Hurons, I, Noël Chabanel, impelled by the desire of fulfilling Thy holy will in advancing the conversion of the savages of this land to Thy faith, do vow, in the presence of the most holy sacrament of Thy precious body and blood, which is God's tabernacle among men, to remain perpetually attached to this mission of the Hurons, understanding all things according to the interpretation and disposal of the Superiors of the Society of Jesus. Therefore I entreat thee to receive me as the perpetual servant of this mission, and to render me worthy of so sublime a ministry. Amen."

So he sealed his vow with his blood, and rejoiced to give up his life for the faith.

The missionaries could see no prospect of any improvement in the condition of the islanders; and the massacre of their companions on the mainland increased the despondency of the Hurons. The Indians held a council and resolved to abandon Ahoendoé. Some would disperse in the remote, inaccessible forests; others would seek a refuge in the Grand Manitoulin Island; some would try to reach the Andastes, and others would be willing to find safety in adoption and incorporation with the Iroquois.

Amid all this perplexity and distress, some hearts were glad. Victor Caradeuc's absence had served to turn his thoughts from Dorothy to his old love, Nialona. He had returned with René le Breton, and had renewed his suit to Nialona with so much ardor and apparent sincerity that she had relented, and they were to be married at an early date. Washaka had become convinced that Hauteroche had never been true to her, and had accepted the devotion of Jules Venette. The two girls had seen little of Dorothy for many months. Madame Couture's lodge was far from theirs; Dorothy was always accompanied by one of the Couture family; moreover, they had not desired any intercourse with her; so their few meetings had been brief and constrained. But their happiness softened their

feeling toward her, and Nialona sent her a friendly notice of her betrothal to Caradeuc.

René le Breton was so eager to return to France that he would have willingly taken the risk of a solitary journey to the French settlements; but he accepted the advice of the Fathers to await the development of their plans.

In May, two of the chiefs asked an interview with the Fathers, and, addressing Ragueneau, begged him to transport the remnant to Quebec, where they would form a church under the protection of the fort.

The Jesuits were deeply moved. They held many consultations, and, for forty hours, prayed in turn for enlightenment. At last they determined to grant the petition, and try to save the remnant of the Hurons.

Soon after he heard the news, Caradeuc waited on the Superior, and begged him to consent to his marriage with Nialona before the departure from the island. The Superior promised to consider it, and to give his answer in a day or two. In a short time, Jules Venette appeared, with a plea that he might take Washaka from the island as his wife. On the evening of that day, Nialona sent a message reminding the Superior that it was the Month of Mary; she had heard that the marriages of that month were especially under the protection of the Queen of Heaven; and since she had first thought of marriage she had wished to be married in May.

The Superior saw no good reason for withholding his consent. Kishik was dead, Nialona and Washaka had been living with a Huron family, and had made many complaints. All present arrangements would soon be broken up; to have the two Christian girls under the charge of their proper protectors would relieve the Fathers of much anxiety. So the consent was given, and a few days later, with as much rejoicing as was possible under the circumstances, the marriages were solemnized in the chapel, and a marriage feast was held in a grove. Most of the guests wore tattered and scanty clothing; it was long since some of them had eaten a satisfying meal; but a special effort had been made for this occasion; the hunters and fishermen had been active, and no one went away hungry.

Dorothy, glad to forgive, and be on friendly terms again, had been granted a respite from her duties with the Coutures, and had entered enthusiastically into the festivities. Her interest in the weddings, and the prospect of a change, gave her new life.

The missionaries hastened their preparations for departure, lest the Iroquois should learn of their purpose and lie in wait. On the 10th of June, they began their voyage, with all their French followers, and about three hundred Hurons.

"It was not without tears," wrote Ragueneau, "that we left the country of our hopes and our

hearts, where our brethren had gloriously shed their blood."

The canoes made their way along the shores where, two years before, one of the chief savage communities of the continent had been settled. Now all was death and desolation. They steered northward, along the eastern coast of the Georgian Bay, till they reached Lake Nipissing. In all directions, they found traces of the Iroquois. The ashes of burnt wigwams showed where the Algonquins had dwelt on its shores; and, farther on, there was a deserted fort built of trees, where the Iroquois, who had caused this desolation, had spent the winter. Solitude reigned along the Ottawa; for the Algonquins of Allumette Island and the adjacent shores had all been killed or driven away.

"When I came up this great river, only thirteen years ago," wrote Ragueneau, "I found it bordered with Algonquin tribes, who knew no God and, in their infidelity, thought themselves gods on earth; for they had all they desired, abundance of fish and game, and a prosperous trade with allied nations; besides, they were the terror of their enemies. But since they have embraced the Faith and adored the Cross of Christ He has given them a heavy share in this cross, and made them a prey to misery, torture, and a cruel death. Our only consolation is that, as they died Christians, they have a part in the inheritance of the true children of God, who scourgeth every one whom He receiveth."

XXIX

Dorothy in Peril

Dorothy travelled in the canoe with the Couture family; but when the canoes landed anywhere for the night she met Nialona and other Huron women and helped in the preparation for encampment.

One evening, when they were descending the Ottawa River, they went ashore for the night, and chose a pleasant grove for the camp. Dorothy, with a number of Huron women and some boys, went into the woods to gather brushwood for the fires. Washaka accompanied them. Since her marriage she had assumed dictatorial airs toward the unmarried or the wives of Hurons. She desired them to address her as Madame Venette.

She appreciated the fact that marriage with a Frenchman had given her a superior position. In one respect, her Huron sisters had cause to envy her, for even the Christianized Hurons retained their savage custom—which neither counsel nor command of the missionaries had been able to remove—of requiring their women to do the most ar-

duous work. Washaka stood apart and dictated or reproved, and Dorothy, partly for the sake of peace, and also because she was secretly amused, followed her directions.

Washaka sat on a mound; the women were to return to her with their bundles, and all would go together to the grove. A few moments after they had left her she heard hurrying footsteps, and Dorothy, with young Bernard Gautier, came toward her with empty arms.

"What, have you brought nothing?" she exclaimed.

"Washaka, in a marshy place, we came upon many footprints! They are freshly made! They are not of our people!"

Washaka sprang up. "Come, haste back to the camp!"

"Nay, but we must warn the others, the women, the little boys. I go with Bernard to seek Mitasog and those with him. Haste you there"—she pointed in the direction where a number of women had gone—"tell them, bring them with you to the camp."

"Where is your sense?" cried Washaka impatiently. "Let them see for themselves. Shall we be caught in a trap? I go to the camp."

So saying, she turned in the direction of the camp, and ran.

Dorothy was terrified, but she would not desert

her friends. "Go, Bernard, you your way, I mine. Ere long we may find them."

Bernard hesitated. The boy adored Dorothy. It was terrible to him to leave her without his protection; but he knew that duty called him to warn the women and children of the danger. They had rashly gone a long distance from the camp. By the time Washaka could give the alarm there, and return with guards, it might be too late. So Dorothy and Bernard parted hurriedly, and went on their separate ways in search of their friends.

Dorothy went to the east, Bernard to the west. They knew not where their foes, if foes they were, might lurk, but they went on firmly, though each trembled. Perhaps the women and children had separated; that would increase their difficulties.

Dorothy presently came to many tracks, apparently those of their own party, in the soft ground, and followed them. She heard happy voices in the distance, and recognized them. But before she drew near her friends she saw a man coming in a direction which would presently cause him to cross her path. She crept under some low, thickly growing bushes, and waited. She thought he had not seen her, for at the moment when she caught sight of him his head was turned. He was within a few yards of her when he came on the trail of her people. He examined the footprints carefully, then turned quickly, and went back in the direction

whence he had come. He was alone, he could not risk an encounter with numbers. As soon as he was at a sufficient distance, Dorothy crept from her hiding place, and ran forward on the trail. Before long, she saw Mitasog with some women and children. They had made up their bundles and were returning.

She held up her hand in warning, and then put it to her lips. They understood the gesture of silence, and lowered their voices. The sun was low, and, though the June day is long, the light in the woods was dim. They could not see how white her face was until she was beside them. Then in her joy at being with friends, she swayed, and Mitasog put out his arm to hold her.

"We must haste home," she gasped. "There are many footprints of strange people. I have seen a man who is not of our party. He has come on our trail. He has gone for his comrades. Mitasog, must we return that way? Or is it possible for you to guide us back by another path?"

Mitasog hesitated. Should they return by the way they had come they might walk into the arms of the enemy awaiting them. Yet by striking through the woods in a new direction they might wander far, and be long in finding the camp.

They consulted hurriedly, and decided to try the new way, trusting that Bernard and his party would do the same, and not attempt to join them.

"We must keep near together," said Dorothy; "for darkness comes fast."

They hastened on; but saw no sign of the open space beyond the woods in which their camp had been established; far as their eyes could pierce there was an endless succession of trees. There was a bend in the river a little way beyond the camp, of which they knew nothing, and they had gone considerably below the direct line to the tents.

Abwi, one of the women, laid her hand on Mitasog's arm. "Hark! they follow!"

They paused but a moment before Mitasog's keen ear discerned the tramp of many feet.

He held up his hand for silence, "Go on. I wait, I look, then I tell you."

He went back a few yards, and peered in the direction of the sound. Though it was dark he could see that those who followed were all men. The hope that it was Bernard and his party was dispelled. It was unlikely that any of their own people would come to them from that direction. He could not afford to take chances. He hastened to the group. "It is dark. I see not clear. There be many. Are they friends? Would they not call to us? They are silent; run, for life. Run side by side."

They ran, as he had directed; but some outran others; the trees grew so thickly, there were so many fallen ones, and there was so much under-

brush in the way, that it was impossible to run side by side. Dorothy had not strength to keep the pace of her companions. Her heart beat fast, her breath came with difficulty, there was a sharp pain in her chest. She felt as if she should suffocate, and knew she could not go on. Her only safety was in hiding before the pursuers came too near, so she crept aside and under a heap of logs, and waited trembling.

The others went on. If they knew she had dropped behind, they knew they dare not wait for her. She heard the tramp of feet as the men passed her. She was safe for the time at least. They had gone in pursuit of the party.

In a few moments she heard a woman's shrill cries and the shouts of men. She believed they had captured Panasawa, who had sprained her foot some weeks before, and had several times fallen back in the race. The cries continued, and came nearer. Dorothy crept to the edge of her thicket and peered out. Two men were returning with a girl and a little boy. It was so dark now that she could not see the girl's face clearly; but she recognized Panasawa's voice, and believed that the boy was her brother, Nigik.

The boy was in front of his captor, and did not attempt to escape; he was evidently aware that submission to his fate was the wiser course. But from time to time he gave a howl of pain when the savage kicked or pinched him by way of diversion.

The poor girl was struggling desperately, at which the man who held her laughed in a deep, guttural tone. More than once he released his hold, and she attempted to run from him, only to be caught again. "Alas, alas! unhappy Panasawa," moaned Dorothy to herself. She had no hope that the captors would be overtaken by the Frenchmen or Hurons. Panasawa would be carried far away by the savages, and no doubt would be compelled to become the wife of one of them. It was unlikely that they would put her to death or torture her. The boy was a fine little fellow; they would adopt him into their tribe. But would not Panasawa rather die than be carried away from her own people, and from Wenenkin, whom she loved?

The cries died in the distance, and Dorothy crept a little way from her retreat, ready to dart in again at the first sound. She listened long, not daring to creep out. It seemed to her that night was far advanced before she heard voices and footsteps, and men went hurriedly past. It was too dark now to recognize by their appearance if they were friends or foes; but she knew by their voices that they were not her own people. She thought their numbers had decreased. They were hurrying so that she had some hope the Frenchmen were in pursuit; but she waited long and saw no one.

What if her people, believing that she had been captured, had broken up the camp, and were now

far down the river? If they had learned that there was a large encampment of the enemy in the neighborhood, they dare not wait. She must not lie there and lose all chance of rescue. She grew desperate, and crept from her hiding place. She saw no one, heard no sound. While she had lain under the logs, a snake had darted over her hand, and she had touched a soft, furry thing, probably a squirrel, that had run from her. The horror of lying in that place was almost as great as the fear of venturing forth. She followed the trail, peering in the darkness to find the steps, and, ere long, came upon an open space where dead bodies lay. There had been a fight in the woods; her people had met the savages. There were neither women nor children there; probably they had escaped. It was lighter in the clearing, and she saw one white face. When she stooped she recognized a French soldier, Louis le Duc. So far as she could see, there was no other Frenchman. But she feared to remain in that place of horror. She heard no moan of the wounded. All were dead.

She followed the trail through the forest till she came to the river. She saw its gleaming before she reached it. But there was no camp, no canoe, no sign of life. She was alone in the wilderness!

The discovery overcame her; she sank on the ground, and lay for a brief time in blissful unconsciousness. With returning sense came the horror

of her situation. She rose and ran to the bank, looked up and down, and saw no one. But it was a winding river at this place; beyond that deep bend she might find her people. She ran on, hoping, fearing. In the dim light of the open country, the scattered trees, waving in the wind, took human shape.

Presently, before her, on the ground, she saw a writhing form. She stood still, unable to move. At first, she could not make out whether it was a wild beast or a human being.

A hand was raised. It was a man; but he did not rise. He had seen her, had evidently motioned to her. Had he wished to do her harm he might easily have caught her. It occurred to her that he was wounded. She went, trembling, a few steps nearer, and he uttered something in a guttural voice that she did not understand. He began to drag himself slowly toward her, moving forward by the aid of one arm, so that she was convinced that he was badly hurt. When he came near enough to see her face, he shrank back. He had never seen a white woman, and was terrified. She went up to him, and spoke to him gently. A trail of blood was behind him, and he was still bleeding from wounds in one arm and his side.

She was roughly dressed in a hempen garment that had been made in the wilderness. She had no linen with which to bind his wounds, but she tried

to stanch the blood by tearing off strips from a woollen petticoat that she wore, though the June day had been warm. She succeeded in binding up the arm so as to reduce the flow of blood, then ran down to the river, and came back with as much water as she could carry in her hands. He drank it gratefully, and she returned for more. For a short time, in ministering to him, she lost the sense of her own danger. But it came upon her again, and she pointed to the distance with her hand, to make him understand that she must leave him. He held her dress, but she pulled it gently from him, and he was too weak to resist.

As she ran along the bank, looking vainly for her companions, three men sprang from a thicket. With a wild cry, she jumped into the river, which was not deep in that spot. She expected them to follow her instantly; but they stood on the bank irresolute, as if transfixed with wonder. There flashed across her mind a recollection of the awe with which the Hurons had at first gazed at her; perhaps they thought she was some supernatural being. She hastened down the stream, but was soon aware that they were following her. She shrieked wildly for help. Some one of her own might hear. But the men were almost behind her!

She struggled desperately on, but it appeared to her that she was not moving. She tried to scream again, but her voice, as in a nightmare, would make

no sound. Then she plunged suddenly into deep water. She had gone over a shoal, and felt herself sinking. She knew how to swim, but seemed unable to move, to help herself. A man seized her, her senses forsook her, and she struggled no more.

After awhile she had a dim consciousness of shouts, angry voices, and a clash of arms; but it seemed as something far away.

When she came to herself, she realized that dawn was breaking, that she was lying in a canoe, and that someone was paddling rapidly. She dreaded to open her eyes, for, though her senses were dimmed, she recalled the events of the night sufficiently to turn her cold with horror.

She heard voices, and they came to her ear with a familiar sound. Surely the speaker was René le Breton. Was it possible that all that had passed had been but a terrible dream? Her head was resting on something soft. Would the savages be so kind to her? She opened her eyes and looked, and in her joy she almost became unconscious again, for her companions were one of the priests, René and Bernard Gautier.

She gave a little cry of joy, and tried to raise herself; but fell back.

"Mademoiselle Dorothee," cried Bernard joyfully, "O, she is recovering! She will not die."

"Did I dream?" she asked. "Did no savages

pursue us? Have I been in a fever and raved? Or was it true?"

"It was true," said Bernard. "You were lost. We had sought you in vain. Some were hopeless; they believed you had been carried far away; that to seek further would be useless; the women, the children, must be carried to a place of safety. They went on down the river. We and others remained to search. We had heard voices of the men on the bank. We were in hiding in our canoe 'neath overhanging trees. When we heard your cries we made no answer, but darted forth and rescued you."

"The Indians, where are they?"

"The three who pursued you lie dead," said René. "Nibishi and Kidjatic were not far from us, and they came to our help. They hastened to the rest to announce your safety. We hope soon to reach them, then we must all haste on together. We dare not stop to rest, to eat, for who knows whether a large force may not be encamped behind us."

"Are all safe?" asked Dorothy anxiously.

René did not answer.

"Tell me, I must know. How many have we lost?"

"Five Huron men and Louis le Duc in the fight in the woods," answered Bernard. "The other men are safe."

“And the women?”

“The women, the children, whom I sought are safe,” said Bernard.

“But of those whom I warned two were taken, a woman and a boy. Was it Panasawa? Was Nigik with her? Were they rescued again?”

No one answered, and Dorothy knew what their silence meant.

“We sought long,” said the priest. “Gladly would we have roamed the woods and given our lives, if need be, for their safety. But that would have been madness. We have many helpless women, little children, feeble old people with us. We dare not expose all to danger of death or captivity for the two, though we have dearly loved the two. Should part of our force remain, both divisions would be too weak to resist attack. Our hearts were torn; yet we must go on, and leave them to their fate.”

Dorothy moaned. She understood the necessity; but it seemed terrible.

The priest crossed himself. “The hand of God is in it. Panasawa is a Christian. The truths that she has learned she will teach her captors. Even the Iroquois, barbarous though they be, do not ill-treat the women captives, unless in the rage for blood in time of battle. Do not grieve for her. We will pray for her continually that she may have grace to testify for the Faith, and lead her captors as captives for Christ and the Cross.”

Dorothy sighed, and covered her face. Pan-asawa was at least as far advanced in civilization as Washaka, and she had a finer nature. She had been surrounded by as much refinement as was possible in that wilderness; the gross habits of the savages would be repellent to her; her lot was hard.

Presently she remembered the wounded man whom she had left on the bank. She raised herself, and told the story. "Did you find him? Is he dead?"

"We found him," said the priest. "He was dying. While Monsieur le Breton sought to restore you, I baptized the man. He understood me, and seemed willing and grateful. The others also, those whose lives we were compelled to take to save yours, were baptized before they breathed their last, and I commended their souls to God. Grieve not, but rather rejoice. From a brief pain here they passed to an eternity of bliss; for may we not hope that from them, who sinned in their ignorance, the pains of purgatory have been withheld?"

"Hark," cried Bernard, "I hear the voice of Monsieur Caradeuc. Our friends are at hand."

And in a few moments, rounding a bend of the river, they came in sight of the fleet of canoes.

XXX

An Unexpected Visitor

The sunlight sparkling on the rippling water, the foliage waving in the soft June air, the birds singing from the shore, spoke only of life and joy, and appeared to Dorothy in pitiful contrast with the horrors of the previous day. She had been transferred to the canoe of Nialona and Caradeuc; with the lively Couture children she would have had no opportunity to rest. She lay, dozing, and awaking in nervous tremor. Nialona, too, was sad; but many seemed to have already forgotten Panasawa, and to have no thought of danger. Not a sign of the enemy was seen, and the missionaries and warriors hoped that the force had been small, and that the band had retreated, not daring to venture within sight again.

Since the time of the destruction of St. Louis, more than a year before, there had been unremitting watchfulness against an Iroquois attack; every member of the party had lived so long in the presence of danger that it had in a measure lost its terror. True, for the greater part of the time they

had had the protection of the fort, they were now in an exposed position on the water; yet the peril that might be so near did not suffice to check youthful gayety. The gloom of starvation and disease that had enveloped them on the island had passed. Before long they would reach a place where they would be abundantly fed, so it was not necessary to hoard so carefully the fast diminishing stores. Besides, as they descended the river, they caught fresh fish in abundance, and from time to time parties of hunters went ashore for game, and joined the fleet farther down.

At sunset of the day after the attack, the party ventured ashore to encamp for the night. Most of them were very weary, for they had paddled night and day, the men taking short snatches of sleep by turns in the canoes. A large force was detailed to keep watch; but no enemy appeared, and the next day and the day following, they went on without alarm.

Dorothy began to ask anxiously if they would soon arrive at Quebec. It seemed to her that as they had been so long on the way, they must be near their destination, and it was evident that she had something on her mind. One evening, when the tents were being set up, she sought René le Breton. "Monsieur le Breton," she began, "Brother René, I——"

"What troubles you, Sister Dorothy?" he

asked kindly. "You are pale. What has happened?"

"Nothing has happened. It is but that—I would speak with the Superior—before—we arrive in the white settlement—I will inform him. I have withheld it from him. I must tell him now. And—Brother René, I am afraid."

He smiled, but there was sympathy in the smile. "I perceive you are afraid, little Sister Dorothy, but do not fear, he will not be harsh with you. Is it some foolish thing you have done? You are very young. He will remember that."

"I—I cannot see that I did wrong; but I know not what he will think. I go to him to plead with him not to give me up—to——"

"Shall I find him, and bring him to you; or, if he is alone, take you to him?"

She gasped. Her timidity was pitiful. René could not understand why she had always held the Superior in such dread. He did not know how she, who had rarely heard a harsh word in her early years, had been intimidated by cruelty and injustice, so that there were few whom she did not fear.

"Yes, go, go to him quickly, while I have determined that I will do it."

He returned presently. "The Superior will see you at once. Come with me."

As they went, he saw her color come and go. He caught her hand, and held it in his strong

grasp, as an assurance of sympathy. It was such a slender, delicate hand. "Poor little Dorothy, be brave," he said softly.

"I will," she answered resolutely.

But when she stood in Father Ragueneau's presence, all her resolution seemed to desert her again, and she gave René an appealing glance, as if to beg him not to leave her. He would gladly have remained, but he knew he must go; so he bowed and went away, without another word.

"Be seated, my daughter," said Ragueneau. The seat was but a log, and the roof a maple-tree.

Dorothy obeyed, but said nothing.

"You wished to see me, my child. You have something to tell me."

"I have, Father." She hesitated, then plunged in desperately. "Father, if, if you should find that—that someone wanted to marry me——"

She stopped again, Ragueneau's face had grown stern. He believed she had come to make a plea for Léon, whom she expected to meet in Quebec.

"O, Father, do not be angry with me. If—if you forsake me, to whom shall I look for help? Surely you would not give me up to him, to them? You could not think it right that I should be forced to marry against my will?"

"Forced to marry against your will, child! Has any man here dared to make you believe that?"

"No, no, not here. It was—to escape marriage

—that I fled. Father, do not blame me. I had been parted from all I loved—the sea between me and those who lived—the grave holding those whom death had taken. In a strange land, without one true friend—they—they who said they were my protectors—sought to compel me to marry one whose very voice made me shudder. Father, I could not. Rather would I have died. I—I escaped—I found refuge with you—do not—do not give me up.”

She had forgotten her fear in her earnestness. She stood before him, her face flushed, her eyes bright, her hands clasped in entreaty. He was much moved; but he said very gravely, “My child, if this story is true, why did you not speak of it long ere this?”

“Father—I could not. I—feared you would compel me to return to them.”

“Not if you have indeed told me the exact truth.”

Her face blazed. She drew herself up proudly. “Father, I would not lie. Had I wished to lie to you, to deceive, could I not have woven a tale? Have I ever done so? It is true, true, true.”

“Then, do not fear, my daughter, that we would be in accord with any who would force you to wed unwillingly. The holy sacrament of marriage should be sanctified by mutual love.”

“I thank you, Father,” she said fervently.

“ Now, tell me further, child——”

His question was cut short. Two Frenchmen burst in. “ Father, footprints, the ashes of fires, have been discovered. The tents have been set up. We are sent to beg you to join in a conference in yonder grove. Shall we embark again? Or shall we venture to remain here for the night? ”

After an anxious consultation, the missionaries and their men decided to remain on land. The search of the scouts in the neighborhood resulted in no more discoveries. By going down the river, they were as likely to come upon the enemy as by remaining where they were.

Sentries stood guard all night, and there were wakeful eyes and anxious hearts in the tents. During the night, the watchers thought they saw forms flitting among the trees, or heard the crackling of branches, but no attack was made. Yet the wily enemy might follow them covertly for days, preparing for a more effective assault.

Morning dawned balmy and fair. They had breakfasted, and were making ready to break up the camp. Dorothy took up a jar containing boiled maize, which was to serve the Couture children for provision during the day. She had just left the tent, to carry her jar to the Couture canoe, when, not knowing why she did so, she turned to peer into the forest.

In another moment, those who watched her were

almost paralyzed with a terror that bade fair to become a panic among the women. "The Iroquois! The Iroquois! She sees the Iroquois!" was the thought of all, for she had dashed the vessel on the ground, and stood, eyes staring, arms thrown upward, then outstretched, as if her brain had been turned by fear.

In another moment, the startled expression had changed to ecstasy, and with a cry of joy which those who heard it never forgot, a cry that rang out exultant, and was echoed through the arches of the forest, she darted through the trees that bordered the clearing, "Lion, my Lion!"

The Superior heard the cry, and hastened to the spot. Frenchmen and Indians, all the Fathers, gathered, and peered to see that strange meeting.

The Superior heard a young man's voice thrill out, "Dorothy, my darling, my own Dorothy."

The words were in English, the young man's dress was that of a foreigner; yet Ragueneau was convinced that it was Léon. Had she not called him by name? Her arms were about his neck, and he held her clasped to his heart. The brown head bowed to the fairer one was surely Léon's head. In their joy at meeting, they had been heedless of the authority of the Church, of all the world save themselves.

Ragueneau stepped up and laid his hand on the young man's arm with a stern grip, "Léon de Charolais, how have you dared——"

The youth still clasped Dorothy, who, laughing and sobbing, hid her face on his breast; but he raised his head, and disclosed a blushing, though unabashed, and happy countenance

The Superior stepped back in amazement. The brown eyes that looked so frankly into his were like Léon's eyes. In face and figure the man bore a resemblance to Léon, and yet, on nearer view, he differed from him strikingly.

"Young man, who are you?"

"My name, Reverend Father, is Godfrey Lyon Dermount. Pardon me for my lack of courtesy. I was unmindful of all save one. Yet had you come suddenly face to face with her whom you loved, from whom you had been separated for dreary years, you, too, might have so forgotten."

The voice of his Dorothy piped from its nest, "Lion, the Superior is a priest, how could he?"

The young man laughed, "Ah, I know that the Reverend Father's bride is the Church; he will pardon me that I cannot choose my words with discretion."

Dorothy escaped from the restraining arm, and revealed a face rosy with blushes, and glorified with joy.

As they stood there, a company of men appeared from the forest. In that band of strangers, Rague-neau's party presently recognized familiar faces—two Hurons who had left the Isle of St. Joseph in

the autumn with Bressani. The truth flashed on them. They had waited in vain for the reinforcements that Bressani had set out to bring; they had come too late to prevent the abandonment of the mission.

Presently they saw Bressani's rugged form. He was hastening toward Ragueneau.

The Superior's eyes were fixed on one who stood apart, with drawn and haggard face.

Léon de Charolais had witnessed the meeting, and it had cut him to the heart.

XXXI

Léon's Successful Quest

Bressani, forty well-armed Frenchmen, and the Hurons who had accompanied him in the autumn from Isle St. Joseph, were on their way to the island for the defence of the mission. The missionaries had been unable to send word of its abandonment. When the newcomers saw the footprints of Ragueneau's party, they also feared that enemies were at hand, and kept watch. Early in the morning, a scout from Ragueneau's encampment, who had ventured farther than his companions, came suddenly on a former comrade; there were hurried explanations, and he was taken into Bressani's presence. He informed the leader of the abandonment of the mission; and, knowing that danger was not near, remained to breakfast, and then guided the band to the camp of their friends. Godfrey, impatient to meet Dorothy, whom he had not expected to see so soon, and reckless of consequences, went in advance.

The missionaries held a conference, and decided to remain in camp for the day. On the morrow, they would start on the return journey.

Godfrey and Dorothy wandered together. The Superior's only restriction was that they should not stray too far from the camp. They tried to withdraw from the many curious eyes; but that was no easy matter; and they were too happy to be much disturbed by peering faces.

Léon was beset by questions, but would reveal nothing. If Dorothy wished to tell her story, they would hear it from her own lips. She had much to say to her lover; but later, he believed, she would find time to talk with her girl friends.

The Hurons were filled with admiration for the handsome, well-dressed stranger. For months, their soldiers and traders had been clad in such garb as they could manufacture in the wilderness.

Later in the day, the two young men met the Superior and Father Bressani in a spot apart. Ragueneau had directed that they should not be disturbed. Godfrey told Dorothy's story up to the time of their separation. He spoke in French, without much difficulty.

"Have you discovered the secret of her parentage? Does your father consent to your marriage?" asked the Superior.

"My father and mother have consented, though we have not learned anything further of her birth. Some day I believe we shall know the truth. And, Reverend Father, I am assured of this—a flower so sweet and pure as my Dorothy never sprang

from evil soil. Whatever the mystery of her parentage may be, it is not one of sin."

"I trust you may be right. She is a good girl," said the Superior.

"Ah, could you have seen her before sorrow stole the bloom from her cheek!" said the lover rapturously. "She was a rosebud girl then. Yet, methinks, frail lily that she is now, she has a new and wonderful beauty."

"We shall see the roses bloom again in her fair face," said Bressani.

"Already I perceive a change," said the Superior. "Her eye is bright, her step quick; she is transformed. The poor child, why did she refuse to trust us, to confide in us?"

"She is so sensitive, Father. The cruel slurs on her mother's name, for which no justification can be found; the harshness with which she was treated after the death of her tender foster-mother, her many sorrows, had wounded her so deeply that she could not speak of them. She had been deceived; moreover, she had been forced by threats to take a vow of silence. She dared not speak."

"Father, that night on the island she told me all," said Léon. "Up to that time, I had had no suspicion of the truth. I besought her to permit me to repeat it to you, but she would not. She had given me her confidence under my promise of secrecy. When I was on my way to Quebec, the

thought came to me that I might find—him whom she loved. If he were yet faithful, his people, learning how true she had been, how deeply she had suffered, might withdraw their ban. In Quebec I heard that far in the wilds a party of English people had been rescued from the Iroquois by a band of *coureurs des bois*, and had been conducted in safety to the English settlements in the south. They said that several of their number had been killed or carried away by the savages, and that one of the captured was a young English girl who had been betrothed to an elderly man of the party. Upon this news, I felt assured that, despite my promise of silence, her safety required that I acquaint Father Bressani with her story. I did so, and he most strictly cautioned the men who had accompanied us to utter no word concerning the white stranger at the mission; for who could tell whether the story might not be carried by some wanderer to the settlements of the south.

“ I crossed the seas with documents for our General. When I had delivered all messages from the mission, and received his instructions, I told him the story of her whom we had sheltered, and besought his aid. He was much interested, and discovered for me that the family of Dermount is noble and well known in England, and, with his consent, and under his directions, I set out to seek Godfrey Dermount of the Manor of St. Basil.

“ On a winter’s day I approached the gates, and saw a young man standing in the gate-way. He had been about to set forth; but, perceiving me, had awaited my coming. His face was pale and sad, and his appearance convinced me that he whom I sought was before me. My dress was not that of his countrymen, and he looked on me with some wonder.

“ ‘ Are you Godfrey Dermount of the Manor of St. Basil?’ I asked.

“ ‘ That is my name, yon house is my home,’ he replied.

“ ‘ I have come many miles to seek you,’ I went on. ‘ Pardon me, I would ask a question. Have you heard aught of a maiden, Dorothy by name, who left your country well-nigh two years past?’

“ His face grew white as the dead, and he leaned upon the gate-post. But, quickly recovering himself, he seized my arm, and said, ‘ Man, have you news of her? In Heaven’s name, tell me. Does she live?’

“ ‘ I saw her but a few months past. I trust she yet lives and that all is well with her.’

“ ‘ We but lately heard,’ cried he, ‘ that she had been carried off by savages. I believed she was dead, or—reserved for a more horrible fate.’

“ Then I told him my story, and he would have me accompany him to the house and tell it to his parents.

"In a pleasant room we found a tall and comely lady. She rose when we entered, and looked with much surprise at Godfrey, for the color had come to his cheeks and the brightness to his eyes. And before he had presented me to her, he seized her hands, and cried, 'Mother, he has come to tell me of my Dorothy. She lives. She is well. Mother, I go with him to seek her, but let me not go without your blessing. When you have heard his story it will win your heart for her.'

"And truly her heart was won. For while I told how sweet and patient, how faithful and noble his Dorothy had been, his mother's tears dropped fast, and she clasped his hand as he knelt beside her, and gave him her blessing. His father also came in and heard the tale, and gave a glad consent. They overwhelmed me with kindness, and sent many messages of gratitude to you, Reverend Father, and soon as we could set forth, sped us on our way."

"And now, Father, I would speak of our marriage," said Godfrey. "We hope, we believe, that you will consent that it take place to-morrow, before we set out on our return."

"To-morrow! Wait, rather, until our arrival in Quebec."

"To-morrow, Father, as you know, we part from Léon de Charolais, when he begins his lonely journey to seek the Hurons on the North Shore. It is our wish that he should be with us; for Dorothy

has a deeper regard for her Brother Léon than for anyone else upon the earth—save myself.”

“Is this your wish, Léon?” asked the Superior gently.

“It is my heartfelt wish, Father.”

“Then, my son, it shall be granted. We will set up our altar in yonder grove. Doubtless, the fair bride will not regret that her garments are but of rough material.”

“Reverend Father, my mother has sent to her many garments of goodly texture. We have carried them with difficulty over rough ways.”

“Will your parents be satisfied that you should be joined in marriage by one who is not of their faith?”

“They will, Father.”

When the Superior had questioned Godfrey, and was satisfied that he and his betrothed had been baptized, he appointed for the two certain meditations and prayers to precede the sacrament of matrimony, and directed the lover to permit the fair girl to withdraw and remain for some hours in retreat.

Then the good news was sent out, and the women were bidden to begin to make ready a marriage feast, and deck a bridal bower in a grove.

XXXII

A Forest Celebration

“Léon,” said the Superior when he was alone with the young man, “when our General directed that you spend three years in the service of the Hurons, he was not aware that the mission had been of necessity abandoned. He had received only the information from Father Bressani that he would return to us with armed men and stores. Doubtless, the Reverend Father, Piccolomini, gave the order concerning you through his desire to fulfil the wishes of our late lamented Superior, Caraffa.” Ragueneau bent his head and crossed himself at the mention of Caraffa’s name. “I am convinced that, were he informed of the circumstances, he would give you permission to return to France, there to remain until your ordination. Nevertheless, as he has said that, by special dispensation, your service in the wilderness shall be regarded as a part of your course, I do not command your return with us; I leave you free to do as you will; this, I am convinced, would be the course of the General were he informed in full. Withdraw now to the

forest for meditation and prayer. Do not fail to take into account the loneliness of the life you propose. Hitherto, our missionaries have had some companionship with men of their race; you will be alone in the wilderness, a solitary witness of the faith to a scattered and vanishing people. We, too, will pray that you may be led to a right judgment. If you inform me to-night that your decision is to return with us to Quebec, there to help us in the work with our Indians, I shall believe that God has guided you to that decision. But if you still feel convinced that your duty is to minister to the few of our scattered flock whom you will seek on the deserted shores, go to them, our blessings and our prayers will go with you."

"Father, I have thought and prayed; I have a conviction that will not be changed by further thought. I longed to see France once more; but when I heard at Quebec of the death of my father I felt that the tie that had bound me to my own land was broken. For the few who are left in the wilderness without a guide I can do more than for the greater numbers in Quebec, who will have other and wiser teachers. I believe that I can follow some of those whom I knew, and who, I trust, will rejoice to see me. With your permission, Wene-kin will return with me. I have counted the cost. I know it will be lonely sometimes; yet as I am persuaded that I am called to that work, I will not

turn back. I will now, as you advise, withdraw for meditation and prayer. I need your prayers that I may be strong, that my faith fail not."

Léon de Charolais spent many hours that night, deep in the woods, wrestling with doubts that pressed him sore, striving to still the pain in his heart at thought of parting with Dorothy forever, to rejoice in the joy that his hand had brought her. For though he had set himself so resolutely to do his duty as he saw it, to try to fulfil the pledges he had given; as of old, his faith was weak, he was beset by questionings. He had begun to understand, dimly yet, but far more clearly than he had once understood, something of the mystery, the purifying power of sacrifice. Were it possible to take the sorrow from his life, to be as though it had never touched him, he would not have it so. His youthful joyousness of heart had left him; yet in its place something had come that had made him a braver and a purer man, his life a richer life.

In the morning the bridal bower was seen, decked with wild flowers. There were crimson roses and white lilies from the forest, and from an abandoned beaver meadow had come scarlet lobelias, calceolarias—white, pink, yellow, and crimson—wild iris, tiger lilies, and trilliums.

To Nialona had been given the honor of dressing the bride. Here and there on the soft white dress and veil she had fastened a spray of roses and ferns;

and a rose blush tinged the cheeks that had been so pale.

The Huron women, who had never beheld anything so beautiful as that bridal dress, were as children in their surprise and delight. And priests and laymen alike gratified the bridegroom by the assertion that a lovelier maid had never been wedded.

Dorothy stood alone with De Charolais, and looked into his face with her joy lighting her beautiful eyes, "O, my Brother Léon, my true and noble Brother Léon," she said, "why must you, who have brought happiness to us, live and suffer alone? And yet, yet, there is something in your face, in your eyes, that I never saw there before. It reminds me of words I once heard my—my father read, 'A Conqueror returning from his wars.'"

"Do not sorrow for me, my Sister Dorothy. If it be possible, let me hear of you; you will be happy; in that I shall find happiness. May all marriage blessings be granted you; joy and peace, and no regrets. God bless you, God guard you, God keep you, my—Sister Dorothy."

His face was pale, but calm and smiling, when Ragueneau said the words that made Dorothy Wynne and Godfrey Dermount man and wife. By the Superior's direction, she gave, as her maiden name, that of her adopted parents.

At the wedding feast—the noon dinner of which all partook before setting out on the journey—it

was noticeable that De Charolais was as full of life and interest as anyone at the board.

When Dorothy went to her tent to change her wedding dress for a darker one that her new relatives had sent her, Léon and the young husband walked apart. There was much work to do in the preparation for departure, but they were excused.

For awhile they talked of their plans; but there was something in Godfrey's mind that he longed, yet hesitated, to say. A call came; the fleet was ready to set out. Then Godfrey grasped the hand of his friend. "Léon, I know your heart, the sorrow of it, all that you have borne and suffered for our sakes. O, my friend, my friend, I would that I could repay you; some good day may God reward you."

Léon did not answer. His eyes were dim, and Godfrey knew that his thought was too deep for words.

Presently Dorothy and her husband took their places in their canoe over which Bernard Gautier and the Huron boys had made a canopy to protect the bride from the glare of the summer sun.

As they went down the river, they looked back many times to wave their last adieux to Léon, who stood with Wenekin on the lonely shore. He smiled bravely above the pain in his heart, and watched and waved to them in return till they passed from his sight.

Godfrey ceased to ply the paddle, for Dorothy's cheeks were wet with tears.

"What is it, dear heart?" he asked, though he divined the cause.

"It is for our Brother Léon. Ah, why must he be lonely, and, I fear, very sad, too, when so much happiness has been given to us? It is hard."

"Yes, dear heart," said Godfrey, bending to wipe away her tears; "it is indeed very hard. But our eyes see only a little way. In days to come, he may receive a joy of which we have no foresight now. Remember, we, too, have sorrowed, and without hope; and our joy is so much the deeper by reason of that sorrow."

XXXIII

To Him that Overcometh

On an Easter morning, Dorothy Dermount sat with her husband by the cradle of their boy, "Léon Godfrey." They had written to Léon of the birth of the child, and that they had given him the beloved name. Months afterward they received his letter in return, and a rug of fur for the infant's cot. In the three years since they had parted, they had heard from him whenever it was possible for him to send them a message. On this morning, a belated letter had come to them, and they talked of it while they watched the young Léon. It had been written many weeks before, in the depths of the forest, sent to Quebec by Indians who were carrying messages to the Superior; thence across the seas by the first ship that left that shore. Early in the summer, by command of the General, De Charolais would return to France, and remain there until his ordination; when it was probable that he would again be sent as a missionary to the Hurons. He would surely hasten to visit his friends as soon as he could gain permission. He had never written a word of complaint; but they rejoiced in the brighter

tone of this letter. They were ambitious for him, that he should win high place in his Church. Surely, they said, the Superior General of the Jesuits would not send a man of his parts back to the wilderness. The child woke, and Dorothy took it in her arms, and prattled to it, in baby words, of the Uncle Léon who would come so soon, and how father and mother would delight to greet him.

Early on that Easter morning, Léon de Charolais rose from his bed on the ground, to try to reach a Huron camp, where he would give an instruction suitable to the day. In the three years that had passed since he had stood on the Ottawa's shores, straining his eyes till the last canoe had passed from his sight, he had never seen a man of his own race, his heart had never been cheered by converse with a friend, other than an Indian friend. He had endured hunger and cold, but these were nought beside the hunger of the heart for human companionship. He had had some hours of spiritual exaltation, when he felt strengthened to press on and endure; but he had passed many hours of despondency.

He had seen in the lives of his people some fruit of the truths he had taught; but sometimes those to whose service he had given his life had turned from him with mockery and derision, or had grossly deceived him. Yet some of his men loved him well, followed him faithfully. He knew that he had

cheered the dying and strengthened the living; and, in moments of discouragement, remembering these, he was nerved to go forward again. But he longed with all the longing of his human heart for the grasp of a manly hand, the cheer of a companion's voice, for such counsel and sympathy as he had had in the first months of his life at the mission.

Did his thoughts ever turn to Dorothy? Many times, but not often with pain. He longed to meet her again, to hear the music of her voice, to see with his own eyes her happiness—the happiness she had received through him. Many times he had fallen on his knees in thanksgiving for his victory on that night on the island, that he had been kept from uttering any word that might have revealed to her the evil suggestion that had come to him. Had she known that even for a moment he in whom she had placed her pure trust had thought to betray it, what revulsion of soul would have come to her, how he might have shaken her faith in God and man. And so, for her sake, and his own, he was thankful that he had never fallen from his high place in her heart as brother and friend.

When he rose on that Easter morning, he saw the leafless trees about him, the dark trunks and mouldering logs, damp and sodden from the melting snow. It was a bleak, gray morning, and its bleakness accentuated his loneliness. But he

pushed on bravely, and presently he was cheered by thought of the welcome of his people. As he walked, he began to sing a hymn of St. François Xavier, one that he loved because it had been a favorite with Brébeuf.

“ My God I love Thee: not because
I hope for Heaven thereby;
Nor yet because if I love not,
I must forever die.

“ But, O my Jesus, Thou didst me
Upon the cross embrace;
For me didst bear the nails and spear
And manifold disgrace;

“ And griefs and torments numberless,
And sweat of agony;
E'en death itself, and all for me,
Who was Thine enemy.

“ And so, O blesséd Jesus Christ,
Should I not love Thee well?
Not for the hope of gaining Heaven,
Nor of escaping Hell;

“ Not with the hope of winning aught,
Nor gaining a reward;
But as Thyself hast loved me,
O, ever loving Lord.”

He could not give it the note of deep spiritual feeling with which Brébeuf had sung. He loved it because it recalled the voice of his friend. As he went on, he asked again the question that he had asked many times: Why had he so little spiritual

fervor when he had given a heart of love to his fellow-man? Why did the light shine for him so dimly when he had sought it so earnestly? He could not find the answer; but some day, he believed, the answer would be given. He would understand why he had been permitted to wander so often in darkness. He thought of St. Peter, who had thrice denied his Lord, yet Peter had been commended by the Master, and had given his life for Him. Léon had never denied with his lips; God only and his own soul knew the doubts that beset him.

He reached the borders of Lake Huron, where, on the dark waters, great cakes of ice floated. He stood on the shore, and watched the smaller blocks rise and fall with the waves. He did not see the foes that lay in ambush, was not conscious of an enemy at hand, until he heard the whiz of an arrow through the air, followed almost instantly by a stinging pain in his side. He turned to defend himself; but arrow followed arrow till his fur coat was pierced and cut in many places. Faint and bleeding, he sank on his knees. His assailants knew that he was now powerless to escape them, and ran to summon others to behold their work.

The clouds parted, and the dull waters danced in the morning sunshine. The glory of it touched his glazing eyes. There came to him the words of the dying Stephen: "I see Heaven opened, and the Son

of Man standing on the right hand of God." Was it but the vision of delirium?

Then, as if spoken in his ear by some one standing by, came words that he had heard many times—the words of another soldier of the Cross: "I have fought—a good fight, I have—finished my course—I have—kept—the faith—henceforth——"

Sight dimmed, hearing failed, and he sank gently on a little knoll of earth.

The savages came whooping through the forest and surrounded him. But they stepped back in amazement, for the dying lips smiled, the eyes that opened once more were illumined for a moment by a great joy; the hand, feebly raised, pointed upward. Then the hand dropped, the eyes closed, and the life on earth was ended.

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